

The Bookman

EDITED BY HUGH ROSS WILLIAMSON

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Notes at Random

Children's Books—The Years Since the War— Aspects of this Civilisation

The only constant attribute of a critic is his power to make mistakes. Many eminent critics endeavour to escape the doom by writing about dead authors (classics); then the mistakes are less obvious, as so few people read the originals. Faced with the task of assessing a living author, the reviewer can only plead that his opinion is at least as likely to be right as anyone else's; while, as a last defence, he can appeal to posterity in the comfortable knowledge that neither he nor his antagonist will be found alive at the judgment.

The addition of years brings not authority but tolerance; an increased store of learning, not a keener insight. That tolerance is a virtue none will deny, but the disturbing thing about the tolerance of the Elder Critics is that it usually implies a deadening of sensitivity. There is no bitterness like the bitterness of the very young; but no vision like theirs either. There is doubtless something very moving about the spectacle of the aged Florence Nightingale murmuring: "Too kind, too kind," but I for one can never read that ending without a pang of regret for the Lady of the Daimon. And so as the critic ages and his early vitriol turns unaccountably to the milk of human kindness, one laments a spent force even as one salutes a Good Fellow.

Mainly, one suspects, the transformation is influenced by the fear of being wrong. If one praises everything, one is bound to praise the masterpieces.

With this fear, fellow-critics, though they may have considerable sympathy, can have very little patience.

Except perhaps in one department—the task of recommending books for the young. Here the odds against success—or even against sanity—are so enormous that the veriest tyro may well shrink from the critic's burden. In no category have so many mistakes been made. That is inevitable. If it is impossible to recapture one's own childhood and one's own standards, it is doubly so imaginatively to assume those of others. Consequently, although this issue contains much about children's books written by those who are far braver than I shall ever be, I refrain from hazarding a choice, and take cowardly refuge in quoting the remarks of someone of greater authority, Miss Gillian Hansard, who describes herself as a Young Person and who is about fourteen.

In "Old Books for the New Young" (3s. 6d.; Heinemann), she provides "an encouragement for brighter, bolder and better reading for children and young persons," and gives her opinions of famous authors and their works. Not, be it noted, about Henty, but about Hardy, whose "Under the Greenwood Tree" she finds

"very entertaining and easy to read"; not about Miss Angela Brazil, but about Miss Tennyson Jesse, whose "The White Ribbon" is a very short book, but beautifully written, and it should be read." Of Stevenson she finds "Travels With a Donkey" "terribly amusing,"



A Horn Book.

Eighteenth century (?) with the Crest of the Tallow Chandler's Company.
Lent by C. T. Owen, Esq.



Youth in 1930—Hikers.

From "Just the Other Day," by John Collier and Iain Lang (Hamish Hamilton).

though all his other books, including "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," bored her so much that she could get no further than the beginning. "Jane Eyre" is her favourite Brontë and "Nicholas Nickleby" her favourite Dickens. After reading her criticisms the adult critic should feel more diffident than ever!

The Victoria and Albert Exhibition

Meanwhile the Exhibition of Illustrated Children's Books at the Victoria and Albert Museum (which remains open until November 12th) displays, in addition to famous historical specimens, the best of publishers' present wares. It is a comment on the evolution of the children's book—and here at least the moderns have it.

But there are some very beautiful examples of the old. The most ancient is a copy of Comenius's "The Visible World," dated 1672, which is one of the first published children's books though there are several horn books which are earlier in date. There is a Queen Anne spelling-book and catechism; the "History of Little Goody Two-Shoes" (did Oliver Goldsmith write it?); a first edition of the first English translation of "Grimm's Fairy Tales," illustrated by Cruikshank; a first edition of "Alice Through the Looking-Glass," with the original drawings by Tenniel interleaved throughout the book (this has been valued at £10,000), and many other treasures. And the "moderns" provide at least one surprise. Among the first school stories of this century is a series representing the entry into fiction of Mr. P. G. Wodehouse!

Puppet Show

A book which, though it is not specifically a children's book, I can recommend to everyone interested in them is "Dolls and Puppets," by Max von Boehn (30s.; Harrap), which contains an exhaustive history from the prehistoric idols of the earliest times to the puppets of the present day. It is I think the puppets who have it, for their fascination is perennial, and affects the most

sophisticated theatre-producer no less than the youngest schoolboy. Bernard Shaw in his foreword speaks for the former: "The puppet is the actor in his primitive form. Its symbolic costume, from which all realistic and historically correct impertinences are banished; its unchanging star, petrified (or rather liquefied) in a grimace expressive to the highest degree of the carver's art; the mimicry by which it suggests human gesture in unearthly caricature—these give to its performance an intensity to which few actors can pretend, an intensity which imposes on our imagination like those images in immovable hieratic attitudes on the stained glass of Chartres Cathedral, in which the gaping tourists seem like little lifeless dolls moving jerkily in the draughts from the doors, reduced to sawdusty insignificance by the contrast of the gigantic vitality in the windows overhead."

In this book is traced, with the help of numerous illustrations, the story of the puppet-show from its genesis among primitive peoples. (Its survival provides "often a much clearer mirror of the thought and feeling of the people than poetry, and not infrequently is the bearer of ancient traditions.") In ancient literature there are glimpses of it; Xenophon refers to the Syracusan whose puppet-theatre could not capture the attention of Socrates, and both Marcus Aurelius and Horace use it as an image in their writings. It was popular in mediæval Europe (Hans Sachs wrote plays for puppets), and between 1600 and 1800 marionettes were the vogue. Actually the first permanent Italian marionette theatre in London was established in 1573, and the first English puppet showman known by name is Captain Pod in 1599.

The most interesting section is probably the story of the revival of the puppet to-day, after it had been driven during the nineteenth century to the remoter fairgrounds, so that "wherever to-day creative artists are at work, there the puppet theatre . . . finds sympathetic admirers to further its course."

A valuable chapter of this valuable work is the text of the puppet play of "Doctor Faust," and another book by the same author which should have a wide appeal to readers of "Dolls and Puppets" is one devoted to a kindred subject—the first volume of "Modes and Manners" (21s.; Harrap).

Just the Other Day

In the last issue of *THE BOOKMAN* an attempt was made to define the artistic tendencies of the post-War years. Now comes an informal history of the country since 1918 entitled, "Just the Other Day," and written by John Collier and Iain Lang (12s. 6d.; Hamish Hamilton). It should prove a best-seller. Not only is it entertainingly and wittily written, but it has all the fascination of portraying events which every reader can remember. It panders to his vanity by reminding him that he has made history—or at the least has been involved in it. It also probably will remind him how faulty a thing his memory is, and he will be surprised to find how many happenings during the last ten years he has forgotten. The authors have achieved the rare feat of detaching themselves from the vantage-point of 1932 in describing the events of earlier years, when the conclusions were still in doubt: though events and personalities are described, if without bias, from a very definite point of view.

It would be wrong to call it a résumé of the newspapers, because in one aspect it will stand as a corrective to the newspapers. Some people may possibly be surprised to realise the lengths to which unofficial censorship is still carried. One instance of this is the authors' account of the "model mutiny" at Invergordon, which is treated very much more fully and candidly than it was in any English newspaper at the time. "The first report in *The Times*, for example, conveyed the impression that the crew of the warship *Rodney* was misbehaving—rather than that the Atlantic Fleet was on strike 'as one unit' . . . and while 12,000 men were refusing to obey orders, a popular picture paper rebuked Labour M.P.'s who had asked questions in the Commons suggesting that all was not well with the Navy."

Not only "the naval catastrophe in the Cromarty Firth," but various political and literary judgments in the book will give rise to much discussion. Probably the best single chapter is the account of the Irish War, though I imagine that heated arguments may arise over the superbly simple definition: "It would be inaccurate to suggest that the Black and Tans were merely murderers. They were also thieves and incendiaries." And in the chapter on the Bright Young Things there is a most deadly and biting disapproval.

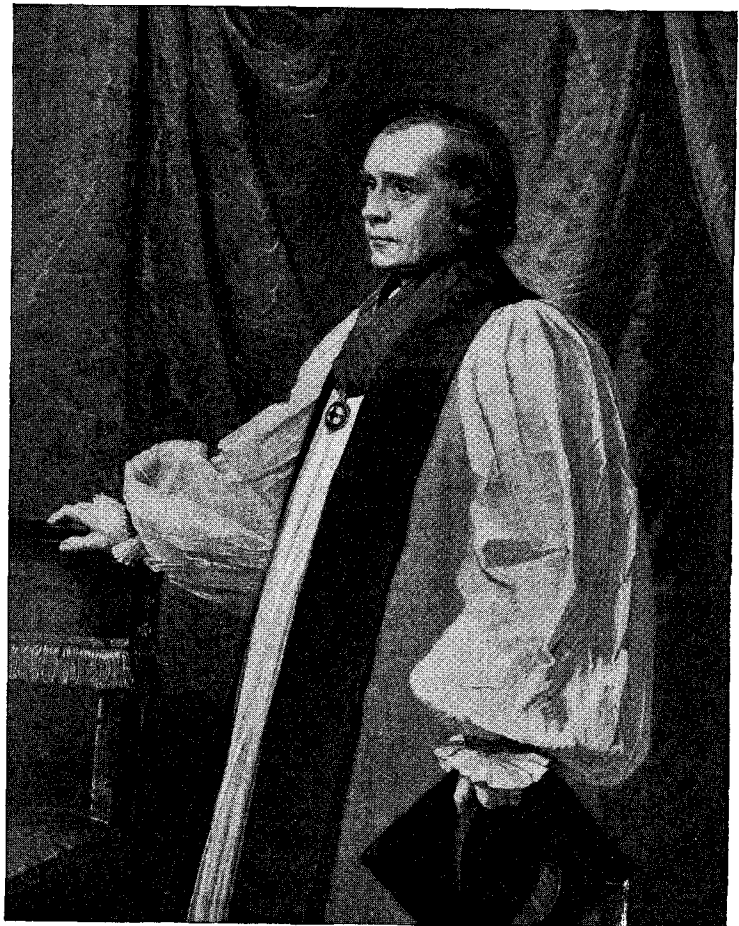
The Plight of the Proletariat

Lionel Britton's much discussed play, "Space Time Inn," has now been published (5s.; Putnams), so that readers who were unable to see the performance at the Arts Theatre, or hear the reading at the House of Commons, can form a judgment on it for themselves.

Personally I found it as dull and as redundant as the author's previous works had led me to expect. It contains an enormous amount of talk on the Shavian model without the Shavian wit. Its moral is that there are two races of beings who speak a different language and cannot understand each other's ideas. Two cockney cyclists, having met with an accident, are suddenly shot into "Space Time Inn," where they meet the great ones of the earth discussing ideas. There is Shakespeare and Shaw, Dr. Johnson and Karl Marx, Napoleon and Queen Victoria, the Queen of Sheba and Eve, each representing and expressing some facet of life or experience. But the cockneys have only one idea—to enjoy themselves in the way they have learnt from watching American films, on the proceeds of a "sweep" ticket which in the course of the play they lose. In their rage at having lost their heaven they blow civilisation, with all its ideas and celebrities, to bits. According to the publishers, the meaning of the play is that "the Great Brains and the little brains do not speak the same language." As most people take this for granted at an early age, a play on the subject would be notable only if it were an extraordinarily good one. "Space Time Inn" is not. The most impressive thing about it is its moral—that unless something can be done to educate the proletariat to a realisation of individual responsibility, our civilisation is doomed.

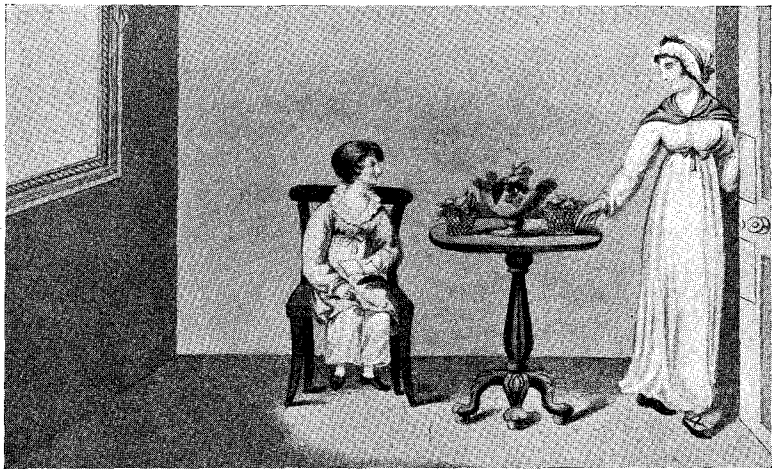
New World?

C. Delisle Burns's broadcast talks from Glasgow on the subject of contemporary civilisation have been enlarged and published as "Leisure in the Modern



Bishop Samuel Wilberforce.

From "Victorian Portraits," by Percy Colson (Rich & Cowan).



The elegant girl or virtuous principles the true source of elegant manners. 1813.
Lent by C. T. Owen, Esq.

World” (8s. 6d.; Allen & Unwin). No one should miss this valuable book, for however one may disagree with many of the conclusions, one cannot dismiss the facts which it sets forth.

Mr. Burns’s thesis is that the increased amount of leisure available to all classes of the community, and the new methods of using it, have led to something that is little short of a revolution; that actually we stand not at the end of an old civilisation but at the beginning of a new; and that a new type of civilised life is possible, arising not from a leisured class but from the leisure of those who work for a living. “This civilisation would be ‘democratic’ if that obscure word may be used to mark the contrast with all former civilisations—all of which have been based upon the assumptions of a ‘slave society.’”

The author is optimistic about the possibilities of such a democratic civilisation, and rebuts fiercely the charge that “democracy is merely a sentimental veil thrown over vulgarity.” He is not afraid of crowds and cinemas and standardisation; “a modern crowd at leisure keeps spontaneous order, and it may easily ‘bring out’ what is best in man rather than what is worst. Community singing indicates what is possible.” (This sentence is not, as might be imagined, ironical.) As for cinemas, “on the whole the film-story has widened the minds of our generation and added considerably to the interests of the majority,” while “what appears to ‘the few’ as an increasing standardisation in modern life, is for ‘the many’ an increasing variety of choice.” Meanwhile the youth of to-day, growing up in a world blessed from their birth with all the benefits of the machine, “is seeking three new things: first, a finer skill in contact between persons; secondly, a progressive in place of a static morality; and, thirdly, a radical re-examination of social, religious, political and economic institutions.”

This book, brilliant, acute and scholarly, is the best defence of the machine which has yet appeared. It will be hailed as “progressive,” which it is. (Nevertheless I would point out that that shibboleth does not necessarily imply improvement—moral, mental or cultural; one can progress quite comfortably towards damnation.) It is eminently “sane,” in that it takes account of the facts of the situation and insists on facing them; though whether its counsel of acceptance is not an act of treachery is to my mind arguable. It is indeed, as the

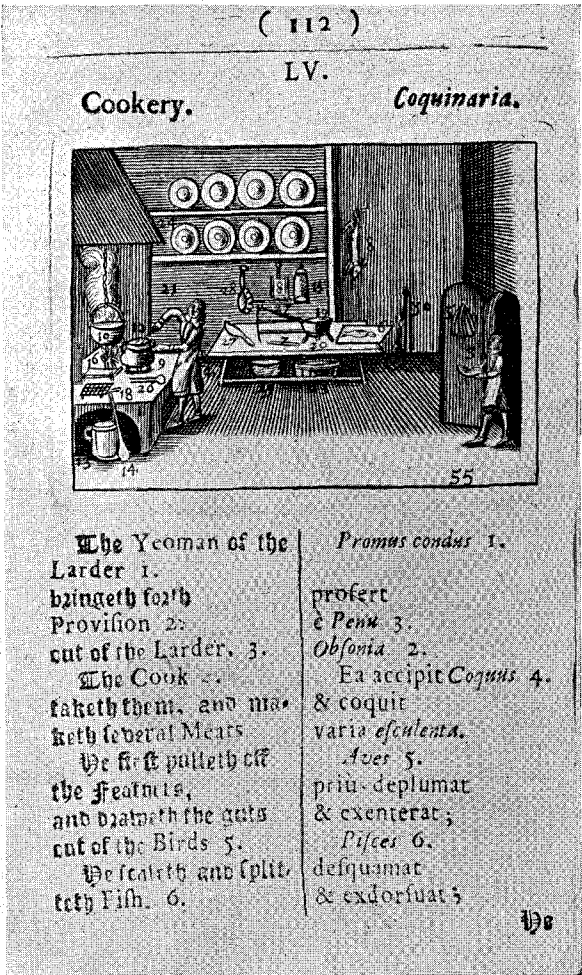
author calls it, “an essay in culture,” even if the picture he paints is one of the destruction of true culture.

Uses of Leisure

The real point about modern leisure, it seems to me, is that it is spent in a state of passivity. People ask to be amused, for they cannot amuse themselves. They rely almost entirely on outside influences, because they have no inner resources. They are so poor in personality that the main use they make of the new freedom is to take drugs—the drug of excitement, the drug of speed and movement, the drug of wish-fulfilment on the silver screen. Even their day-dreams are supplied by Hollywood. They may indeed have lost their old fears, as Mr. Burns points out, but

they have acquired a new one—the fear of being alone. So they go about in crowds.

The leisured class, against which the author animadverts, had, we know, vices enough; it was snobbish and lazy and extravagant and callous; but it was never the positive menace which the leisured mass is likely to be in the future unless by some means it can be educated. The leisured class, because it was on the whole educated to self-dependence and individual action, did contrive to produce every great artistic and political achievement which the world has known; it justified itself by



Comenius: The Visible World: or a picture and nomenclature of all the chief things that are in the world . . . 1672.
Lent by C. T. Owen, Esq.

"LITERARY GENTS" By Thomas Derrick

II—WALTER DE LA MARE



Walter de la Fairie

its works. And its patronage made access to its ranks possible to everyone who had the root of the matter in him, were he peasant or peer. The most anti-democratic age in English history made way for that poor provincial poet, William Shakespeare; and under a mediæval autocracy the proudest of all thrones, that of the Vice-regent of God, was open to any boy in Christendom.

The real danger of the present "levelling down" is that it destroys the standards which made possible the individual achievements of the past. In the Augustan Age, for instance, the crowd roared acclamation for the gladiator in the arena, but not even the roarers imagined their hero to be in any sense comparable in achievement with the brilliant poets and intellectuals at Cæsar's court or the protégés of Mæcenas. To-day a vast multitude of literate beings consider a popular boxer or tennis-champion in some way mystically endowed as an arbiter of taste.

Civilisation in any form must *always* depend on the minority. At the moment that minority is harassed as never before by the attacks of a mass composed of individuals who lack individuality, and whose passive vacuity in leisure hours leaves them a prey to exploitation by people, such as cinema and press magnates, who in a civilised society could have no power.

And the Church?

It is noticeable in Mr. Burns's book there is hardly any reference to the Church, and what reference there is in the form of a mild scolding for being so old-fashioned. No institution is easier to attack or has been more subject to it. In particular, the fact that vocal hostility to it is diminishing does not mean that its "failure" is less marked, but rather that it is now taken for granted. Indeed one almost needs to apologise for mentioning the Church if one is to be considered "modern." But the matter is of more than ecclesiastical or sectarian significance; whether one owes allegiance to the Church or not, whether one is interested in the Church or not, one must realise that the Church is a vital factor and may indeed be a deciding factor in the present crisis. As I write, Mr. Lansbury's impassioned appeal to the Church to give some sort of leadership is having repercussions everywhere.

I welcome particularly therefore the incisive analysis made unpretentiously by the Rev. J. C. Hardwicke in "A Letter to an Archbishop" (1s.; Hogarth Press), wherein without bitterness, hysteria or special pleading

he reveals the reasons for the present plight. He shows that the "ideal of efficient religion," which can claim as its founder "Samuel Wilberforce, the energetic and bustling Bishop of Oxford, admired by countless Englishmen under the affectionate title of 'Soapy Sam,'" has gradually fallen to pieces under the impact of an even more efficient world.

The first blow was the Education Act of 1902, which not only transformed the old Church-governed schools into secular institutions, but turned out a completely new product which was indifferent or hostile to the claims of the Church, and which in effect meant that "the Church as a cultural pilot had been dropped." Then the rise of the cheap press disseminated new ideas, and for the mass of the people "its educative influences rivalled and outstripped that of the Church," while "the standards of the half-educated were erected into canons of truth." The next blow was the social development, such as Old-Age Pensions and the Insurance Act, which meant that the poorer people among the workers now looked to the State and not to the Church for amelioration, and rendered much of the Church's work in charity unnecessary.

Again such undenominational influences as the Scout Movement and cheap amusement on a commercial basis, even before the advent of cheap entertainment in the form of the cinema, drew off many who found their secular recreation Church-provided.

Thus, even before the War, the symptoms of "failure" were apparent. During it "the Church seemed somehow to have nothing to say but what was already being said, with far more lucidity and point, by the evening newspapers," and "our spiritual currency was more debased than that of the Central Powers subsequently became." And in the post-War years there is evident a decline of intellectual standards and a preoccupation on the part of the clergy "with trifles and privileges." The moral of all this is that the whole attitude of the "efficiency" regime is utterly wrong—as many laymen have been suspecting for a long time.

In short the Church capitulated to the Machine exactly as Mr. Burns is suggesting that culture must capitulate to it. I only hope that the result of the one will serve as a warning to the enthusiasts for the other. The Church, returning to the two things which stand in unbending opposition to the machine-made mass—individualism and ideas—may yet save civilisation from suicide.

HUGH ROSS WILLIAMSON.

THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS

HISTORY

"England Under Queen Anne: Ramillies and the Union with Scotland." By G. M. Trevelyan. 21s. (Longmans.)

The second volume of Professor Trevelyan's great history tells an intricate story with as great a skill as the first. This is history as it should be written, appealing equally to the scholar and the general reader.

AFFAIRS

"Just the Other Day." By John Collier and Iain Lang. 12s. 6d. (Hamish Hamilton.)

A most entertaining account of post-War England. (See review in these columns.)

CRITICISM

"Ten Letter Writers." By Lyn Ll. Irvine. 8s. 6d. (Hogarth Press.)

This study of three French and seven English letter-writers is excellently balanced and contains much astute incidental criticism.

A TRANSLATION

"Prose Poems from 'Les Illuminations' of Arthur Rimbaud." Put into English by Helen Rootham. 7s. 6d. (Faber & Faber.)

This rendering is as good as it is possible to make any translation of Rimbaud. Miss Sitwell contributes an introductory essay on the poet which, in spite of sentimentality, has a certain value.

A BOOK FOR CHILDREN

"Good Afternoon, Children." By "Columbus." Illustrated by Morton Sale. 5s. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

An exquisite production and of amazing value. (See review on page 104.)

SOME THOUGHTS ON CHILDREN'S BOOKS

By Iolo A. Williams

A PILE of children's books, all recently issued, but for the most part containing work that has previously achieved popularity among children, tempts me to begin my article by trying to discover what qualities they are in literature that appeal specially to the child's mind.

Happily Mr. Milne, in the "Preface for Parents" which he has prefixed to the reissue in one volume of his two extremely successful books of children's verse, provides a convenient starting-point for the investigation. He points out that the little boy, Christopher Robin, actually comes into very few of the poems, but has been chosen as the hero of the collection because his name has caught the fancy of children:

"For children must see some projection of themselves in any book which they are to take to their hearts. Alice

is not so lovable as the White Knight, nor so engaging a conversationalist as Humpty Dumpty; but it is the presence of Alice which has given her books their immortality."

That contains a truth, and yet Mr. Milne's statement narrows the matter down a great deal too much—or so I am inclined to believe. It is true that children love a book built round a character with which they can identify themselves. But there are many other types of story that they love also, containing no characters which might by any stretch of the imagination be themselves.

Let us consider for a moment Mr. Milne's own verses. In the opinion of such children as I have access to, the most attractive of these is the high-spirited piece called "The King's Breakfast," which contains no child character at all. What we do have in that poem is the contrast between homely, familiar things, such as bread, butter and marmalade, and kings and queens—who to the childish mind personify all that is at once gorgeous and remote. This, it seems to me, may give one the key to the problem. The child must have in his stories something that is familiar to him—it may be another child such as himself, but also it may be friendly and familiar animals—Peter Rabbit or the Dormouse—

or even inanimate objects that are well known to him—the nursery carpet or the slice of bread-and-butter. These form the connecting-link between the known and the unknown, and lead him by the hand, as it were, from the one to the other. Moreover the childish reader especially enjoys contrast between the familiar and the unfamiliar, whether that be used to produce a whimsical or comic effect (let us say in the Mad Tea-party in "Alice"), or an effect of magic and mystery (as in "Jack and the Beanstalk" or "Puss in Boots").

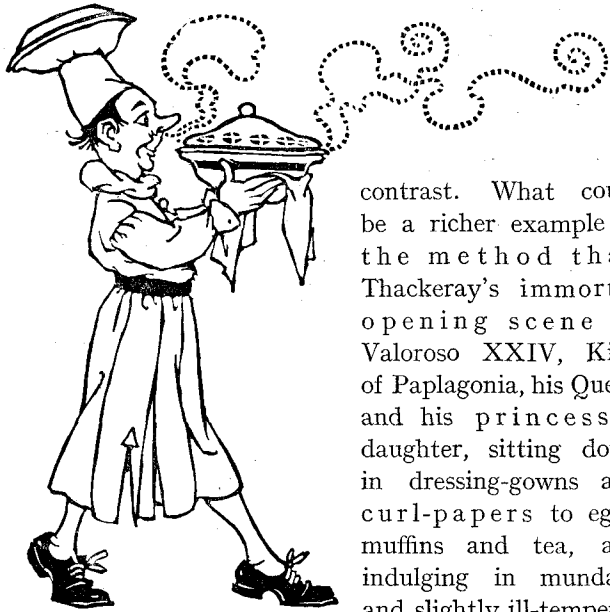
It is to be doubted whether this covers a wide enough area of literature to comprise all the poems and tales that have appealed most strongly to children; but it certainly goes further than Mr. Milne's dictum, and attempts to state generally the truth of which his contention was only a particular instance. It ap-

plies certainly to a great deal of what Mrs. Lynd has included in her wonderful "Children's Omnibus," a volume that gives an astonishing bulk of good juvenile reading for a very small price, for it contains, besides shorter things, the whole of "The Heroes," "The Rose and the Ring" (alas, without the rhymed head-lines that are such a delight in the editions in original format), "Black Beauty" and "Alice in Wonderland," and an abridged version of "A Midsummer Night's Dream." How do these fit the conditions that I have suggested for success with children? Of "Alice" nothing need be said, for she was the instance chosen by Mr. Milne to illustrate his much narrower thesis. "A Midsummer Night's Dream" is a pure fairy play—and fairies, being human in form and more than human in power, give by their mere presence that contrast between the familiar and unfamiliar of which we were speaking. In "Black Beauty" we have the well-loved animal, the horse, endowed with the mind and speech of a human being and telling its story—another instance of the known leading on to the unknown, and a sure method of interesting children. As for "The Rose and the Ring," this is possibly the best of all children's stories, for it is not only a fairy-tale of considerable ingenuity, but an altogether delectable piece of comic



While the Professor was chasing the Elephant.

From "Good Afternoon, Children," by "Columbus" (Hodder & Stoughton).



Pease Pudding Hot.

From "The Land of Nursery Rhyme," by Alice Daglish and Ernest Rhys (Dent).

contrast. What could be a richer example of the method than Thackeray's immortal opening scene of Valoroso XXIV, King of Paplagonia, his Queen and his princessly daughter, sitting down in dressing-gowns and curl-papers to eggs, muffins and tea, and indulging in mundane and slightly ill-tempered conversation?

There remains, of the things just mentioned,

"The Heroes." This is perhaps on rather a different footing from the rest, in that the Greek legends which Kingsley retells were not originally intended for children, but were part of the mythology of a people. Possibly this difference is rather apparent than real, for what are national legends in one age become children's fairy-tales in the next. But in any event it serves to introduce another obvious fact—that not all books which children enjoy are essentially children's books, in the sense of being written exclusively or principally for children. There are a good many things of this kind in the "Omnibus" of which Mrs. Lynd has been so accommodating a conductor—Macaulay's "Horatius" for instance, and Cowper's "John Gilpin," both admirable stories simply and fluently told, and to be classed among children's poetry, not because they contain anything appealing solely to children, but because they contain nothing which only an adult could understand.

Mrs. Lynd clearly realises the importance of such not essentially childish books in a properly constituted juvenile library, for she says in her introduction:

"My one regret in making the book was that it could not be twenty times larger. . . . I should have liked it to comprise, to begin with, all the best nineteenth century fiction. That for children is the perfect century. It combined a photographic realism with a moral convention which eliminated everything foreign to the interests of a child. . . . I should like to have included them all—Scott and Dickens, and Wilkie Collins and Charles Reade, and Charlotte M. Yonge, Fenimore Cooper and Jules Verne, Kingston and Blackmore, to name the chief of these prolific entertainers."

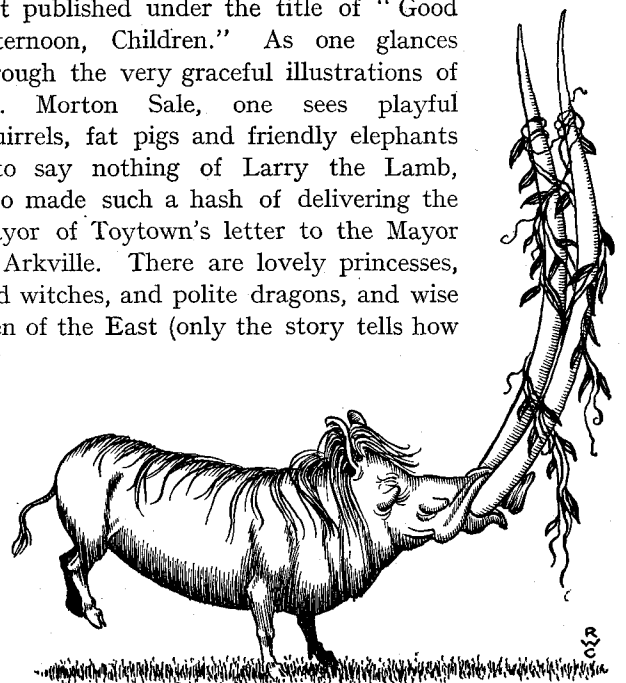
Why then, one wonders, does Mrs. Lynd so curiously include Stevenson's "The Pavilion on the Links"? It is an exciting tale indeed, but both in vocabulary and in theme it is packed with things "foreign to the interests of a child." No doubt it is a good story for a youth of sixteen or seventeen—who is not a child, being (as Shakespeare knew) "not yet old enough for a man, nor young enough for a boy; as a squash is before 'tis a peascod, or a codling when 'tis almost an apple: 'tis with him in standing water, between boy and man." For him "The Pavilion on the Links" is

admirable—but you will not get him to read it if you insult him by the offering of any book labelled with the word "children."

Having possibly by this time cleared our minds a little as to what we mean by a child's book, let us turn to the examples that remain unmentioned in our pile. Among the writers of them the most notable artist is Mr. Kipling, who brings many old favourites together in the selection he has made from his animal stories. Here we have the enthralling story of "The White Seal," who found new and safe beaches for the other seals. Here too is the best of all animal "thrillers"—the tale of how "Rikki-Tikki-Tavi" the mongoose killed Nag the cobra and Nagaina his wife. As reading for a child of eight or nine, let us say, these two are Mr. Kipling's high-water mark. Each tale is swiftly told, and elementary human feelings and methods of thought are given to the animals who act it. Incidentally a great deal of interesting natural history is imparted to the reader, and the simple and unaffected style is much better liked by children (and by adults too, if they are sensible) than the deliberately facetious archaism of such stories as "The Cat that Walked by Himself"—to give one example also included in this collection.

Another book which exploits the ancient story-telling plan of taking animals for your characters is "New Tales for Old," by Miss Geraldine Elliot who, as a wireless "Aunt," has had considerable experience of entertaining children. Her tales are founded upon African folk-lore, but she has not bound herself by her originals, which she has altered as she has thought fit. But whereas Mr. Kipling in his animal stories persuades one—even after childhood—that what he is telling us is the truth, Miss Elliot only attempts the easier method of humorous fantasy. She never tries to make her animals real living beasts, as Mr. Kipling does; she only uses them as pegs to hang her whimsies and fables upon.

Animal stories have moreover their place in a pleasant selection of broadcast children's tales just published under the title of "Good Afternoon, Children." As one glances through the very graceful illustrations of Mr. Morton Sale, one sees playful squirrels, fat pigs and friendly elephants—to say nothing of Larry the Lamb, who made such a hash of delivering the Mayor of Toytown's letter to the Mayor of Arkville. There are lovely princesses, and witches, and polite dragons, and wise men of the East (only the story tells how



What Wonderful Tusks you have, Njiri!

From "New Tales for Old," by Geraldine Elliot (Elkin Mathews & Marrot).

they are not so wise after all), so there are all sorts of things to appeal to the young, who will enjoy especially I think Mr. Carey Grey's charming story, "The Secret of Content."

My last two books are designed for very young children indeed. In them therefore one might expect—or at least hope—to find childish literature at its most essential. Evidently Miss Bonner's "Bedtime Stories," one for each night of the year, meet a demand, for they have been seven times reprinted since they first appeared in 1924. The stories vary in length from one hundred and fifty to six hundred words, and their structure is generally extremely simple—sometimes so simple that they are scarcely stories at all. Some small thing is taken—perhaps the arrival of a pet, perhaps a scrap of natural history, perhaps an anecdote of a boy who has been given a new knife—and spoken about for a few moments. Personally I should have

doubted (had the success of the book not been there to show me wrong) whether the method was formal enough to satisfy children, who are apt to be particular, and like their stories told them with a proper formality and at some length.

About Miss Daglish's and Mr. Rhys's book of nursery rhymes there can however be no doubt. This is an admirable collection of examples of the very earliest literary form which the small boy or girl can appreciate. Page after page of delicious jingle-nonsense, yet always with one toe in the realms of sense, meets us here. Nor is everything an old friend—at least to myself. This

obviously American rhyme, for example, is quite a new joy to me:

"Oh, Pillykin, Willykin, Winky Wee!
How does the President take his tea?
He takes it with melons, he takes it with milk,
He takes it with syrup and sassafras silk;
He takes it without, he takes it within,
Oh, Punky-doodle and Jollapin!"

And should not every modern baby learn these lines, to which the compilers draw attention (with justifiable pride) as "the very latest of all":

"Flying-man, Flying man,
Up in the sky,
Where are you going to,
Flying so high?"

"Over the mountains
And over the sea——!"

"Flying-man, Flying-man,
Can't you take me?"

Naturally, in an anthology of this sort, countless points arise as to readings. I could almost fight a duel

with Mr. Rhys over the true text of those verses concerning the black hen which lays eggs for gentlemen. But even if we decided by mortal arbitrament between the merits of our two versions, some wretched fellow would turn up to do battle for a third. So let me break no lances, but merely welcome a very jolly book.

This article started, very correctly and philosophically, with the general. It has ended, rather loosely, with the particular, which has possibly shown that even the rather wide net I endeavoured to cast was not wide enough. But Heaven forbid that I should start all over again. . . .

The Christopher Robin Verses. By A. A. Milne. With 12 plates in colour and text decorations by Ernest H. Shepard. 8s. 6d. (Methuen.)

The Children's Omnibus. A Story-Book for Boys and Girls. Edited by Sylvia Lynd. 7s. 6d. (Gollancz.)

Animal Stories from Rudyard Kipling. Illustrated by Stuart Tresilian. 6s. (Macmillan.)

New Tales for Old. A Book of African Folk-Stories for Children. Adapted by Geraldine Elliot. Illustrations by R. W. Coulter. 3s. 6d. (Elkin Mathews & Marrot.)

Good Afternoon, Children. Wireless Stories and Plays from the Children's Hour. Edited by "Columbus." Illustrations by Morton Sale. 5s. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

365 Bedtime Stories. By Mary Graham Bonner. With coloured illustrations by Florence Choate and Elizabeth Curtis. 5s. (Philip Allan.)

The Land of Nursery Rhyme. As seen by Alice Daglish and Ernest Rhys. With a map and pictures drawn by Charles Folkard. 7s. 6d. (Dent.)

A FAIRYLAND OF ANCIENT BOOKS

By George Frederic Lees

On the topmost floor of an oldish house in the rue de Richelieu—a house which is associated with Honoré de Balzac, and just sufficiently old in its architecture, and eccentric as regards its creaky staircases and tortuous corridors, to be an interesting relic of the days when Parisian architects planned on really generous and commodious lines—there is a unique flat, the rooms of which are overflowing with the rarest items of ancient juvenile literature. This wonderful library Messrs. Gumuchian have got together after many years of patient research; and it contains more than six thousand story-books, primers, A B C's, games, documents, etc., which have been brought together from so many lands.

Out of deference for the dim and distant past of learning, we naturally first turn our attention to the most ancient contributions to the history of childhood—to two MSS. of the fifteenth century: one, "De Ingenuis Moribus et liberalibus studiis adolescentis liber," by Petrus Paulus

Vergerius, a celebrated Italian pedagogue—a beautiful specimen of the handwriting, in Roman characters, of a Milanese scribe; the other, "De legentis liberis gentilium," in which the saintly Basil the Great recommends to young Christians the perusal of the works of profane authors, on account of the eloquence and poesy they can find therein. Nor can we pass by without interest and a smile (as certain smarting recollections of our own schooldays flock to the mind) the illustrated title page of a book which was probably printed by W. de Worde about 1520. It is from a work by John Stanbridge (1463–1510), entitled "The Longe Accydence newly Corrected," and the quaint woodcut below the title depicts a schoolmaster, holding a birch in his left hand whilst pointing with his right to the pages of an open book, which a pitiful-looking scholar is holding in front of him. Seven other pupils, in gowns and with long hair, are grouped around, with faces expressive partly of awe, partly of amusement. A unique woodcut,



Title page to "The Longe Accydenne newly corrected."

Possibly printed by W. de Worde (circa 1520). An early school book by John Stanbridge (1463-1510). On the verso is the black-letter text seen on the right of the illustration.

since it is totally different to the one in the very rare Grenville copy of the "Longe Accydenne" in the British Museum.

Coming to modern times, the books for children written by Charles and Mary Lamb are well represented. Here is the first edition of Elia's "Beauty and the Beast," with the original yellow wrappers, and slightly variant when compared with other copies recorded by Livingston in his bibliography of Lambiana. This is a copy of the "Surprise" issue, and has all the eleven points demanded by the bibliophile who is willing to pay a substantial sum for this little book which M. J. Godwin (Mrs. Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, the wife of the author of "The Adventures of Caleb Williams"), brought out at the Juvenile Library, in Skinner Street, in 1811 for a few pence. There is also the *editio princeps* of another Godwin publication—"The First Book of Poetry for the Use of Schools," in which Charles Lamb's poem, "A Birthday Thought," first appeared. Then we take up that exceedingly rare nursery classic and "masterpiece in the literature of talking animals," entitled "Felissa, or the Life and Opinions of a Kitten of Sentiment," an anonymous story, published by J. Harris in 1811, with twelve coloured plates, which bears internal evidence of the author being Charles Lamb. There is all the quaint humour and shrewd outlook on life, quaintly pictured through a feline temperament, in this remarkable book (a copy of which is in the writer's own private library), which we associate with the writings of Elia. It has rightly had more than two pages devoted to it in Florence V. Barry's "A Century of Children's Books." What she says may be endorsed whole-heartedly. A gem indeed worthy of being placed side by side with another Lamb item, also published anonymously, namely "A Book of the Ranks and Dignities of British Society," published by Messrs. Tabart at the Juvenile and School Library, in 1805.

Oliver Goldsmith shares with Charles and Mary Lamb the credit for having made the most noteworthy contributions to English juvenile literature at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. Before us are no fewer than thirty-five works, signed or anonymous, from "Goldie's" enchanting pen; and two of them are among the rarest children's books in the world. I refer to two editions of "Little Goody Two-Shoes." One is the fourth edition printed for J. Newbery in 1767. The first and second editions are non-existent. A complete copy of the third edition is in the Coleridge Collection at South Kensington (the British Museum copy is incomplete), and has been found to correspond exactly with the fourth in

our hands. The second copy of the same work is the first American edition, printed at Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1787. If some may have doubts about the authorship of "Goody Two-Shoes" and another rare little book, "The Twelfth-Day-Gift" (a Newbery publication of 1767), let them fondle with entire satisfaction an undoubted work by the author of "The Vicar of Wakefield," to wit, "Dr. Goldsmith's Celebrated Elegy, on that Glory of Her Sex, Mrs. Blaize" (1808), illustrated with twelve hand-coloured plates and with an engraved text—a very tall (130 mm.) and remarkably fine copy.

Those eighteenth century publishers, the Newberys, hold so prominent a place in the history of children's books that I would fain mention them once more

before passing on to a wholly new section of juvenilia. In the name of childhood, they were capable of anything. Fancy serving up "Tom Jones," "Joseph Andrews," "Pamela," "Clarissa" and "Sir Charles Grandison" for the delectation of "all the Good Little Masters and Misses of Great Britain, Ireland and America," as the catalogue at the end of one of these excessively rare editions of the classics prettily puts it!

And now let us wend our way in this fairyland of ancient books along the thrilling paths of adventure and into some of the most glorious ways opened up for us by masters of English prose. Our love of literature pure and simple, and that enthusiasm for collecting rare books which Scott, in "The Antiquary," epitomised so admirably in the characters of Monkbarns and Snuffy Davie, are equally divided as we are shown many of the rarest editions of "Robinson Crusoe," appropriately grouped with numerous editions of "The Family Robinson Crusoe," the work of Johann David Rudolf Wyss (1781-1830). It is not often that one can have the opportunity of handling the first edition in German (two volumes published at Zurich in 1812-13) of "Der Schweizerische Robinson," and the next minute behold the first edition of the first translation into English of the same immortal book. A keen collector rummaging among the book-boxes of Switzerland might have the luck to come across a copy for a few francs, but the chances are greatly against him; it is much more likely that he would have to disburse a couple of hundred pounds for a tall, clean copy in the original boards. As regards the first English translation of this book, an interesting point has been raised; it was one of Mary Jane Wollstonecraft Godwin's ventures, and it has been surmised that William Godwin's son-in-law, Shelley, financed the transaction and publication.

Another English first edition of a translation which must be mentioned in the same breath as the works of Defoe and Wyss is "The New Robinson Crusoe," by J. H. Campe (1746-1818). To this French writer is due the credit of having popularised "Robinson Crusoe" as an instructive nursery book, apart from a work of adventure. Stockdale published the English translation in 1788 in two volumes, with thirty-eight woodcuts by Bewick. It is of the greatest rarity, not only as a translation of a work which has been wrongly attributed by Mr. A. Edward Newton to Wyss, but also because of the fine illustrations.

One more section must certainly be glanced at before we take our departure from a collection of books which, in truth, holds forth to the student and collector weeks if

not months of delightful instruction. No fairyland such as this is would be complete without fairy stories; and these we find row after row on shelves glorious with the original bindings which the exacting collector of to-day requires. There is, to take a striking example, the first edition and the first issue of Grimm's "German Popular Stories," published in two volumes (C. Baldwyn: 1823; James Robins: 1826), and illustrated with the twenty-two Cruikshank etchings which are the best work this artist ever did. "How do you know," a novice might ask the bookseller, "that this is the first issue?" "Because there is no umlaut over the 'a' in the word 'Marchen' on the engraved title page of the first volume," he would reply. Such is one of the many fine points which industrious bibliographers discover. The works of Charles Perrault (1628-1703), the delight of generation after generation of French children, fill three long shelves of the library. And when we come to look carefully into the matter of French juvenile literature, we are amazed at the exquisite entertainment provided for the little ones by such writers as the Comtesse d'Aulnoy (1650-1705), Madame de Genlis (1746-1830), Madame Campan (1752-1822), Arnaud Berquin (1747-91), Pierre Blanchard (1772-1836), J. N. Bouilly (1763-1842), Jean Pierre Brès (1782-1832), and the many



The Frontispiece illustration to "Felissa; or the Life and Opinions of a Kitten of Sentiment."

A very rare Children's book of 1811, which is attributed to Charles Lamb. It is illustrated with 12 hand-coloured plates somewhat in the manner of Rowlandson.

writers who contributed in later years to the charming "Bibliothèque Rose," the original editions of which—especially when they are printed on *papier de chine*—are now eagerly sought for by bibliophiles. Little did the Juliettes and Maries, the Pierres and Jeans of former days, who often treated these masterpieces so rudely, imagine that their gift-books would later be collected and treasured.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS FOR THE COLLECTOR

By Norah Nicholls

Even a bibliophile must have his recreation, and what more suitable to restore mental equilibrium to the exhausted anatomist of bibliomania than a course of study of the habits, for instance, of "the three little foxes who didn't wear stockings and . . . didn't wear socks"? From a strictly collecting point of view there is much to be said for the acquisition of Juvenilia: they are rare in good condition, their legitimate owners having torn, creased and defaced them; they illustrate the history of manners, religion and society; they possess the sentimental appeal which makes "the collector's item." They can have the lure of age of *incunabula*, the lure of rarity of a First Folio, and that of extreme value for the mercenary.

The earliest samples of Children's Books are the Horn Books, consisting usually of the Lord's Prayer, printed on a little sheet of paper, nailed on a piece of board of the shape of a spade's head and covered with transparent horn. These early "books" have been the subject of exhaustive study, notably by A. W. Tuer, and to-day their value is so high that forgeries are rife and an expert is needed to distinguish them. These cradle books of the nursery were succeeded by "battledores"—folded cards containing a few wood-block illustrations as well as the literary elements. These persisted into the nineteenth century and were still being manufactured at the beginning of the Victorian era. Overlapping them in point of date, the Chap-books enjoyed a vogue during the reign of Queen Anne and the first three Georges. They were usually issued in octavo form, consisting of sixteen pages, and after 1726 became duodecimos of twenty-four pages. Their contents at first consisted of tales which had previously been handed down orally and were not primarily intended for children. The text was undistinguished until the eighteenth century, when their existence seems justified by the appearance in this form of "Gammer Gurton's Garland" (?1760), and versions of "Robinson Crusoe," of the famous tales of Perrault and the ill-comprehended "Gulliver's Travels."

An outstanding book which had a tremendous vogue during the eighteenth century was Bunyan's "Divine Emblems; or Temporal Things Spiritualized," which was really a curtailed version of a longer work—a "Book for Boys and Girls; or, Country Rhimes for Children. By F. B." The first edition, dated 1686, is in the British Museum and was reproduced in facsimile by Elliot Stock in 1889.

The first real children's publisher was the famous John Newbery, whose portrait is immortalised by the description of Dr. Primrose: "the philanthropic bookseller in St. Paul's Churchyard who has written so many books for little children. He called himself their friend, but he was the friend of all mankind." Newbery started in business at Reading in 1740, and persuaded famous authors to employ their gifts in this novel field, comforting them with the assurance that their guilty secrets were safe with him and that their anonymity was assured for aye. Under such conditions Oliver Goldsmith and a host of less distinguished writers kept him supplied with material of a more dignified type than had ever been supplied for the Improvement and Entertainment of the Young. The best known book issued under his imprint is the slight but precious "Little Goody Two-Shoes," now confidently attributed to Goldsmith, of which the earliest edition extant is the third, at South Kensington. A copy of the fourth edition of 1767 was offered for sale in the Gumuchian Catalogue, "Les Livres de l'Enfance," together with the first American edition, a diminutive 64mo—"Printed at Worcester, Massachusetts, By Isaiah Thomas, And Sold, Wholesale and Retail, at his Book Store, 1787." These are justly described as "two precious little books; perhaps the most important in the History of English Juvenile Literature."

The first issue of the children's edition of the "Elegy on the Death of a Mad Dog" only appeared about 1810—almost forty years after Goldsmith's death. An edition

was published in 1885 with illustrations by R. Caldecott. Other children's books attributed to the famous Oliver on more or less reliable grounds are "The Drawing School for Little Masters and Misses. . . . To which are added The Whole Art of Kite Making. . . . By Master Michael Angelo"; "An History of England, in a series of Letters from a Nobleman to his Son," the first edition of which is dated 1769; and "A History of the Earth and animate Nature," of which Mr. Temple Scott, the Goldsmith expert, writes: "The 'animate Nature' is not a scientific work, but it is Goldsmith in his most delightful moods and in his most engaging Self." "Pretty Poems for the Amusement of Children Six feet High. . . . Calculated with a Design to do good" was a parody of "Thomas Tagg's Collection of Pretty Poems for the Amusement of Children Three Foot High" and contains "Some instructions which will enable Parents to bring their Offspring to the Gallows."

After the pioneer work of Newbery, the collector finds himself on more familiar ground with the work of Maria Edgeworth (the "Parent's Assistant" (1796); "Moral Tales" (1801), "Harry and Lucy and Frank"), Charles and Mary Lamb, Thomas Day, the fairy-tales of Perrault, William Blake's "Songs of Innocence" (1789) and, of our own times, the fairy tales of Andersen and of Grimm, the adventure stories of Marryat, Ballantyne, Stevenson, culminating in the Lewis Carroll, Barrie, Kipling,

Hawthorne and Milne books, to which collectors require no introduction.

As early as 1913, an exhibition of Children's Books was held at Olympia. More ambitious was the showing of Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach's personal collection of Early American Children's Books, 1682-1840, at the New York Public Library in 1927, which included such gems as John Cotton's "Spiritual Milk for Boston Babes" (1684), and the Rev. James Janeway's "A Token for Children, being an Exact Account of the Conversion, Holy and Exemplary Lives and Joyous Deaths of several Young Children," published by Benjamin Franklin in 1749 (first edition 1671). At the present time we have the exhibition at the Victoria and Albert, with announcements of a special exhibition "which will be attractive to children as well as grown-ups" (!) at Messrs. Bumpus of Oxford Street, at which emphasis will be laid on comics, penny dreadfuls and marionettes, entailing new "points" for the persistent inquirer.

Coincident with the exhibitions comes a supplementary Catalogue from Gumuchian et Cie—"One Hundred Noteworthy Firsts in Juvenile Literature," which includes such outstanding offerings as the first English edition of the "Swiss Family Robinson," published by Mary J. Godwin in 1814, the first edition of "Sandford and Merton," the first English translation of Grimm's "German Popular Stories," with George Cruikshank's illustrations, and the first English and American editions of "Huckleberry Finn."

LOUISA ALCOTT AND HER STORIES

By Marjory Royce

(*Louisa Alcott was born on November 29th, 1832.*)

She is still read; be sure of that. Just before beginning to put down a few observations about this wonderful woman, a casual glance at the daily paper revealed that the result of a vote taken among Derbyshire schoolchildren as to their favourite reading, put "Little Women" third on the list. Why this persistency of interest? The girls in the story are so old-fashioned now, so "humble and earnest," so ready to listen to the voice of conscience, so full of vows, and they never use the word "bored."

"We'll work like bees and love it, too, see if we don't," said Jo.

"I'll do my lessons every day, and not spend so much time with my music and dolls," was Beth's resolution.

The secret is Miss Alcott's own. And we must remember that almost all the seriousness is wrapped round with a glinting humour.

A reviewer said recently that he believed that the continued life of the Brontë novels is due to the conviction, there strenuously set forth, that the deep love of one being for another is the really important thing in life. And the mutual devotion of the March family to one another flames up as brightly from the Alcott pages as ever it did. It warms us; it reassures us. They possess, through all their trials, the one thing that matters. A sense that these people held the right values is impressed upon the most vague and critical reader.

The facts of Miss Alcott's life may be briefly told. She was a daughter of that tender and unpractical idealist, Amos Bronson Alcott, the friend of Emerson. They lived at Concord, among other places. There was never any money; and there were four girls. Mr. Alcott gave philosophical "Conversations," but nobody was inclined to pay for them. Looking round on this poverty, due to the father's lack of worldly wisdom, Louisa roused herself to labour. Once asked what her definition of a philosopher was, the reply came instantly—and it was a significant one: "My definition is of a man up in a balloon, with his family and friends holding the ropes which confine him to earth, and trying to haul him down." Sensible Louisa's love for her dreamy father, and her tolerance for his failings, are amply shown in Miss Cheney's "Life, Letters and Journal."

She had been scribbling for years with some success before the entry in her diary occurs: "Sept. 1867. Niles asked

me to write a girls' book. Said I'd try." She immediately adds that she didn't like the job, but "Little Women" made an instantaneous success, and we can never forget the entirely joyful human note in the entry made in her notes of five years later:

"Nov. 1872. Forty on the 29th. Got Father off to the West—(more Conversations)—all neat and comfortable. I enjoyed every penny spent, and had a happy time packing his new trunk with warm flannels, neat shirts, gloves, etc., and seeing the dear man go off in a new suit, overcoat, hat and all, like a gentleman. We both laughed over the pathetic old times with tears in our eyes, and I reminded him of the 'poor as poverty but serene as heaven' saying."

Miss Alcott's characters are for the most part taken from life. The sisters in "Little Women" were her own sisters, and "Marmee" is her mother. Mrs. Alcott's epistles to her passionate, impulsive, warm-hearted Lou, when she was small, remind us of Roman Catholic letters rather than the notes of a Puritan, in their close scrutiny of faults and victories.

"I have observed all day your patience with baby, your obedience to me and your kindness to all," says one message placed on the pillow.

It is not difficult to see from what near sources Miss Alcott's influences sprang. She passed on in her stories the record of her own slender triumphs, of small, sharp battles and glorious conquests over temper and slackness. One may say without hesitation that the father's fine and distinguished personality, and the mother's persistence in her struggle against adversity, gave something permanent, through the watchful daughter, to the world. Mrs. Alcott's motto, "Hope and keep busy," suited Louisa exactly.

Miss Alcott's bright insistence throughout all her stories, is that the things that matter are those that the very poorest and most obscure may obtain. None of her best boys and girls find their pleasure in spending money; they are all absorbed in things that may be done without cost at home. They dress up in old curtains and ancient hats, they make their own plays and act them, they sew shirts to earn a few pence, they devise countless delights for wet days—make toffee, have a private pillar-box, walk in the rain and glance gaily at the sun in the puddles. This insistence comes strongly forth even to-day, and is doubtless comforting and

reassuring to the many children with an inferiority complex who read. "All is well," preaches Miss Alcott. "Do your duty, though it's tiresome, I know." When Amy comes back from Europe with her husband, the father and mother smile at one another with happy faces. Not because Laurie is well-to-do. "Better than riches is the wealth of love and confidence."

Miss Alcott struck new ground with Jo, there is no doubt. She was unconventional, boyish and altogether before her time:

"Very tall, thin and brown, and reminded one of a colt, for she never seemed to know what to do with her long limbs, which were very much in the way. She had a decided mouth, a comical nose, and sharp grey eyes."

Jo spent her time in a most original manner. How we loved it when she sat up in her attic eating apples and crying over the "Heir of Redclyffe." Later her long brown hair came off. Throughout her career, even when married to Professor Bhaer (whose creation many thousands could never forgive), she continues to be dashing and modern—though at a very far remove from the young lady of to-day who, in one of Sir Philip Gibbs's books, went a walking tour with an Oxford lad. ("They made a common dump in Julian's knapsack. He rolled Audrey's pyjamas—blue silk—round his own, which were pink, put her slippers and tooth-brush and a silver-backed brush and other essentials in the middle of the bundle.")

Miss Alcott's life was one of self-sacrifice and, when money at last came to her, she unselfishly lavished it on her people. Book after book came from her pen, as her quick, generous eyes perceived opportunity for helping relations and friends. It is always a puzzle to the writer that the other stories are not more popular in Great Britain. We see no reason why "Little Women" should have it all its own way. "Eight Cousins" is highly entertaining, and its sequel, "Rose in Bloom"—a splendid piece of characterisation written in three weeks—is well worth reading; while "Polly, the Old-Fashioned Girl," picturing the simple, rosy-cheeked maiden visiting the jaded town girl, is a glowing and brilliant portrait of eternal types.



Laurie was a young lover, but he was earnest.

From "Little Women," by Louisa M. Alcott (Sampson Low).

Miss Alcott knew a good deal about psychology, she respected children, and all they did was important and worth while in her eyes, and her bubbling vitality splashed over in her vivid pages. She had the sense to see that children *do* fall in love, and not to put that fact aside—as it is so often thrust away in the anæmic school book of to-day. The boy and girl romance in "Jack and Jill"—much of it taken from real life—is fresh and amusing, even after fifty years.

When Louisa died at forty-six, broken in health after countless family anxieties (which always counted more to her very affectionate heart than all the pleasant adulation lavished on her in late years), she was buried across the feet of father, mother and sister, that she might "Take care of them as she had done all her life."

A great natural storyteller was Louisa Alcott, a sincere believer in the everyday joys of existence. Not for her the philosopher's path. Though she worshipped her neighbour, Emerson—"The man who has helped me most by his life, his books and his society—from the time I sang the Mignon song under his window (a little girl) through my hard years." She made a yellow lyre of jonquils with her own hands for his funeral. And doubtless something healthily ruthless in her books is due to his bracing exhortations.

She is happy and skilful in phrase, and her style is all her own. Take this extract, chosen at random from her illuminating journal. (A pink hyacinth has bloomed, she is hopeful about selling a story, and thinks the flower a good omen. But, cross and tired, she goes out in the evening without some payments she had expected.) She writes: "Went out to buy a squash pie for my supper. It snowed; was very cold. No one paid, and I wanted to send my money soon. Felt cross and tired as I trudged back at dusk. My pie turned a somersault, a boy laughed, so did I, and felt better." There is always a disarming and most lovable modesty and frankness in all her work. When writing "Little Women" the journal confesses: "Never liked girls, nor knew many; except my sisters, but our queer plays and experiences may prove interesting, though I doubt it."

SUPERMAN: THE LIFE OF FREDERICK THE GREAT. By Nathan Ausubel. 18s. (Routledge.)

An addition to the literature on Frederick the Great is always welcome in this country if only that it may revive an interest which Carlyle almost killed by over-kindness. This large and painstaking book is however, one feels, intended for an American rather than an English public. The journalistic efficiency of its chapter titles, and such sentences, taken at random, as "Love like a quiet purling stream, flowed on in an almost inaudible undercurrent from the dim underground regions of his

unconscious being," and "His youthful blood blossoming within him clamored in fierce protest against the tyranny of Nothingness; without, surged the life purpose of creation standing in rhythmic waves of motion and bathed in the brilliant light of his own emanation," suggest the style. The author's thesis is that the real Frederick was the artist and philosopher, while the Frederick who thirsted for glory and conquest was a madman; for the "real" Frederick was not the "realist." It is a tenable position certainly, though not altogether convincing. The Emperor is too complex a character for any simple solution.

WHAT YOUNG GERMANY IS READING

By Esmé Whittaker

WHEN writing of what influences any small group of persons (and the "highbrows" are not more numerous in Germany or Austria than elsewhere), the difficulty always arises of introducing names which are almost certainly unknown to the foreigner, and leaving out those who have consolidated their reputation enough to be translated and read in other countries. And this necessity gives perhaps an unfair picture because, though the famous authors are no longer read and are regarded as useless and superseded, they have already left their impression upon those intellectuals who have by now completely forgotten them. And secondly, it is almost impossible to give a summary of how the author's work is regarded except by comparing him to an English author, and parallel cases are very hard to find.

Mention first of all should be made of three women writers. Of these the most important and the most famous is Mechtilde Lichnowsky, who is looked upon as the best modern prose writer. "Birth," which was published in 1926, is still regarded as one of the greatest modern novels, and is indeed a masterpiece which uses the modern "psychological" method without in the least letting it run riot and make the story—that of adolescent development—merely a mass of detail in which the important is swamped with trivialities. She is one of the few writers who have gained from psychology more than the trick of making an old story new by retelling it in new language but without new understanding. Here the whole of the new knowledge is used in a restrained and masterly manner, without any signs of the amateur who is not sure of his capabilities or his restrictions.

Another book by the same author which is certainly worth reading is "Der Kampf mit dem Fachmann" ("The Fight with the Specialist"), whose story is summed up in the title. The style is lighter than in her other book, and her wit and irony are admirably brought out by the dialogue, which is here used to tell a story, or rather a series of sketches, with amazing virtuosity.

Another name, perhaps more famous though not so revered by the younger generation, is Riccarda Huch. Here we find no breaking away from old traditions. Her style is traditional enough to remind the reader sometimes of Goethe, and her name is connected chiefly with historical biography. Yet it is a living tradition which she represents, and to everything which she writes there is a personal note added, which saves her work from any trace of dryness or pedantry, and which commands respect. She is the conservative figure of contemporary German literature, while between her and Mechtilde Lichnowsky stands Ina Seide, known as a poet rather than novelist.

It is however among the poets that we find the two really outstanding figures, Rainer Maria Rilke and Stefan George. Rilke, although belonging to a past generation, must still be considered as one of the great forces forming modern German taste. Lately his growing popularity has in a snobbish way affected the appreciation in which he is held by the young intellectuals, but since in his earlier works the sheer virtuosity of his wording runs away with his thought and produces

a comfortable vagueness, there is some true critical reason for this lessening of critical esteem. His later poems, the "Duinesian Elegies" and the "Sonnet to Orpheus," are works still unsurpassed in richness and variety of rhythm, expressing subtle thought and mystical emotion.

But it is in Stefan George that we find the most influential and the greatest of the moderns, and his name divides the present from the past as sharply in Germany as that of T. S. Eliot does in England. He is the most difficult of living German authors to judge calmly. Here, as so often in modern German literature, largely irrelevant matters seem to have a great effect upon an author's reputation. His many activities have built up a clique which is reminiscent of the Browning societies of Victorian days, and he is as vigorous in his views on politics, belonging to the Right Wing, which is the one that threatens individualism least of all, on matters of science, and finally he is often as esoteric as ever Browning was. Indeed, when thinking about his work, there always springs to the mind English poets who are certainly no longer modern. He often reminds one of Flecker, and more often perhaps of Dowson, then suddenly one feels that one is reading Swinburne without the full intoxication of his rhythm. To complicate the task of forming any judgment is the fact that he appeals to the reader upon a great variety of levels, and one is never quite sure if the final esoteric meaning of many of his poems has been grasped.

It is however just as illuminating, and for the English reader perhaps more interesting to know what foreign books are admired and read in Germany, and we can pass on to this question after dealing very shortly with one or two less important German authors. Heinrich Mann, the brother of Thomas Mann, is read extensively, but chiefly for his socialistic and radical views. He is very reminiscent of Zola, but without either his force or his greatness. And Stefan Zweig, who is already well known in England, is read in much the same way as Lytton Strachey—with amusement but with nevertheless a certain amount of reserve. Also a Prague writer, Franz Kafka, who died two years ago with little notice being taken of him, is gradually winning a posthumous fame for the skill with which in objective writing he introduces spiritual values.

When we turn to English books we find unaltered that excessive admiration of Byron and Oscar Wilde which seems inherent in the German character, and impervious to argument. But within the last few years a change of taste can be seen in more modern English writing. A few years ago one was surprised to find that, in German eyes, recent English literature was summed up in the one word Galsworthy, and if they felt any need to add another author, it was almost invariably Maurice Baring. Now however that Joyce's "Ulysses" has been translated, and some of D. H. Lawrence, Galsworthy and Maurice Baring are slowly but surely losing a great deal of their influence. It would nowadays be difficult to find any young and intelligent German who was not acquainted with Joyce's work, except his later "portmanteau word" experiments. Lawrence too is

widely read, and although his first novel, "Sons and Lovers," is universally admitted to be a masterpiece, the fact that few people have troubled to study his development, and that many have jumped from his early novels to "Lady Chatterly's Lover," has left a sense of bewilderment. This will however probably give way shortly to a more thorough reading and understanding of his work, and consequent increase of his reputation and influence. At the present moment it is Aldous Huxley who is the most popular, and who is regarded as the most representative of living English novelists.

When we turn to poetry, we find that the most famous name is W. B. Yeats, who is read and appreciated in Germany probably more, and more intelligently than in England, where he has to struggle with his anthology pieces as has Rachmaninoff with his popular Prelude. Of the other English writers not a great deal is known. T. S. Eliot is not likely to find a translator, nor many Germans capable of reading him in the original. Virginia Woolf, though she has found a translator, does not by any means read as well in German as in English, and so much is lost that it is little wonder that she has not the reputation abroad that she enjoys at home.

SOME GERMAN NOVELISTS

The Pascarella Family.

By Franz Werfel. 7s. 6d. (Jarrold.)

Young Woman of 1914.

By Arnold Zweig. 7s. 6d. (Secker.)

The Child of Ward IV.

By Hertha von Gebhardt. 7s. 6d. (Barker.)

Death and the Lover.

By Hermann Hesse. 7s. 6d. (Jarrold.)

It is becoming more and more clear that no English reader has any excuse for not being acquainted with contemporary German fiction. The translations of German novels come thick and fast, and they are no longer restricted to the works of authors whose names are already known in England. While the novels of such well known writers as Leonhard Frank, Vicki Baum, Franz Werfel, Lion Feuchtwanger and Arnold Zweig are certain to find their public, it is satisfactory that lesser known writers are also receiving the honour of translation. It is true that some of them are hardly worth it, but there is always the chance that a valuable discovery will emerge in this way.

The novels under review are evenly divided between authors who are well known to English readers and those who have still to gain an English public. Herr Franz Werfel was much praised when "The Hidden Child" was translated into English, and his new book, "The Pascarella Family," marks a considerable advance in his literary progress. The obscurity of "The Hidden Child" has disappeared, and "The Pascarella Family" has the charm of simple, direct and sympathetic writing. The quiet adventures of the three sons and three daughters of Don Domenico Pascarella, who ruled them with a tyranny which was meant to be in their own interests, make an absorbing story, and the incidents and revelation of character are unfolded with humour and insight. Grazia's meeting and love-affair with Arthur Campbell, the collapse of Don Domenico's business, the departure of the three sons to Brazil and the death of Lauro are the main incidents in a story which deals in disaster but is saved from heaviness by the author's delicate touch.

The many readers of "The Case of Sergeant Grischa" may remember that Herr Arnold Zweig intended his book to be part of a trilogy, of which the other volumes would be devoted to the characters of Bertin and Winfried. He has now decided to develop his theme at greater length, and "Young Woman of 1914" is the first of two books in which Bertin plays an important part, while a final volume will be devoted to Winfried. In the present book,

In French literature it is extraordinary that Proust, whose thoroughness and even whose complex style seems to be more the expression of Germanic than Gallic character, and who would supposedly be the greatest influence on modern German literature, is very little read and inspires little enthusiasm. The two authors here who have the largest circle of influence are André Gide, who enjoys a fame rather difficult for an English reader to understand, though it is now on the decline; and Paul Valéry, who appeals to a smaller clique, but is more highly estimated, and whose reputation waxes as André Gide's wanes.

In Scandinavian and Italian literature the taste of Germany is almost coincident with that of England, and also when we turn to Russian authors very much the same taste manifests itself, but with one important exception. Chekhov is neither in his stories nor in his plays accorded anything like the admiration which he enjoys in England, and the explanation which is usually offered, and one which is perhaps important in understanding the different point of view of Germany, is that Germans do not like, nor do they willingly read short stories.

By Edgar Holt

as in "The Case of Sergeant Grischa," the reader's interest is equally divided between the characterisation and the able presentation of the background of the story. The love-story of Lenore and Bertin, with its detailed history of Lenore's 'unwanted child, is developed in a realistic manner which may repel some readers, but the picture of Germany in 1914 and the description of the various German reactions to the War are given with the skill and sincerity that one expects from Herr Zweig. "Young Woman of 1914" should take a high place among books which deal with the emotion of the civil population in time of war.

The names of Frau Hertha von Gebhardt and Herr Hermann Hesse are unfamiliar to English readers, and it must be sadly admitted that the present volumes are not likely to lead to any great demand for further translations of their work. "The Child of Ward IV" is founded on the story of two women who each gave birth to a child in a hospital at the same time. One of the children was drowned, and the hospital authorities were unable to distinguish between the dead child and the one who survived. The reactions of the two women and the subsequent history of the child have been developed by Frau von Gebhardt with great psychological insight, but the absence of any lightness makes her book a remarkably depressing one. Herr Hesse's "Death and the Lover" is a mediæval romance, in which the amorous and spiritual adventures of a handsome young man are described with picturesque detail. The book reminds one of Mr. Cabell's "Jurgen," but while Mr. Cabell's tongue was quite visibly in his cheek, Herr Hesse apparently wishes to be taken seriously. Unfortunately the general atmosphere of the book is unpleasant, and the repetition of similar events is distinctly tiresome, so that one feels in the end that Herr Hesse has lamentably failed where Mr. Cabell delightfully succeeded.

THE GLORY OF THE HABSBURGS. By Princess Fugger. 18s. (Harrap.)

For those who wish for a picture of the brilliant society in Vienna under the reign of Franz Joseph, these reminiscences of Princess Fugger may be recommended, for she knew all the great figures of that time, was present at most of the great social functions, and was on terms of friendliness with members of the Imperial family of both Austria and Germany. These departed glories she reproduces with an undistracted pen.

FRETSAWS AND VIRGIL

A Schoolmaster's Reflections on the Neglect of the Humanities

"Speaking at the tercentenary of St. Swithin's School yesterday, Sir Joshua Bullion remarked that, while everyone now realised the importance of education, there was a feeling among many experienced business men that in the face of modern conditions the school curriculum should be modified and brought more into line with present-day requirements."

How sensible and level-headed such a pronouncement seems! But what are the Sir Joshuas really getting at? They are anxious to do away with the old training in the "humanities," and substitute vocational instruction. Such a change would enable young people to leave school as "experts," qualified for immediate entry into their life's work. From the "small profits and quick returns" point of view this vocational training may be logical enough, but others may hold a more exalted view of the purposes of education.

Plato's ideal state was governed by an aristocracy of intelligence, and while it is easy to take exception to the details of his Republic, the broad outlines form a sound basis to work from.

In our view education should serve two purposes, both closely interwoven; it should promote the social qualities and draw out to its highest point the individual personality. This can only be done by developing reason, perception and imagination.

The teachers of the humanities realised this. Pure mathematics and the logical, hard language of the Romans form a perfect training for the reason. Perception and imagination gain their stimulus from poetry, philosophy, historical study and fiction in English and foreign tongues. Greek offers unrivalled opportunity for appreciation of the subtlety of language, the beauty of poetry and the splendour of ideas.

Even from the utilitarian point of view there is really every advantage in such a training. A woman educated on these lines will make a better cook than a professional, if she cares to concentrate on it seriously. To take an extreme case, she would detect the logical fallacy in assuming that because beef-steak pudding and apple pudding are both good, they are good at the same meal. A

politician with knowledge of the past will come nearer to estimating the chances of the future than will a man vocationally trained. A magnate who knows something about the past effects of geographical conditions upon commerce, is the more likely to extend his activities successfully.

The importance of Rome in education can hardly be exaggerated. The synthetic quality of the language develops clear-headedness; the history of her rise and fall is the only complete political lesson the world possesses. She preserved Greece for us. Her customs, organisations and laws have impregnated Europe; while her language is a stepping-stone to French, Spanish, Portuguese and Italian. And yet we are told to treat all this as if it had never been (an impossibility in any case), and spend our schooldays learning leather-work.

The truth is that most manual and mechanical work can be learnt quite late in one's career; and a liberal education best befits young people to approach such activities.

There may be some trades or professions where it is necessary to begin the training at an early age to the exclusion of the better life; but if these exist they are few in number. We all know the tedious wretch who leans back after dinner, and says: "I left school at fourteen, now I'm worth £20,000 a year"; the only answer is to tell him that properly educated he would have been worth £40,000. It will annoy him, and is probably true.

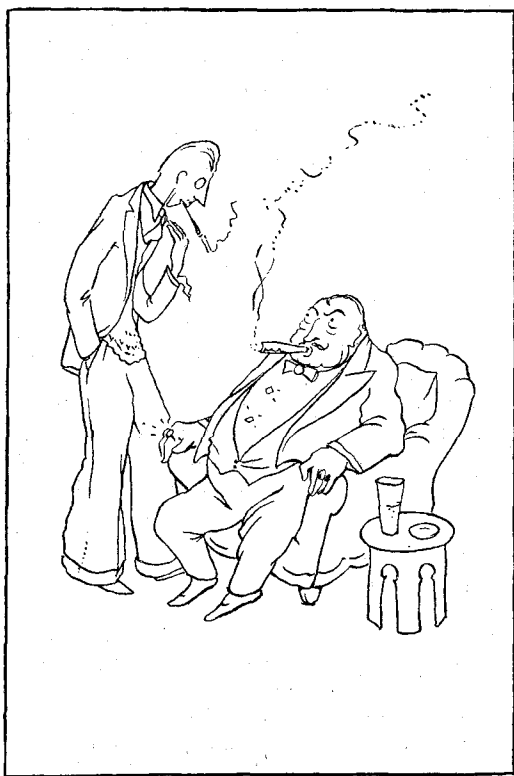
It is unfortunate that at present the "old-fashioned" training is not yet available to all who are capable of benefiting by it, but if the secondary schools continue to develop somewhat on the lines of public schools (though these have plenty of weak points), and eschew shorthand and typewriting, etc., there may be more hope in the future. The general principles of encouraging thought should be followed even in much earlier stages, and the three "R's" should be mastered before much time is spent on basket-work and other spare-time pursuits.

People *must* be taught to think at school; if they don't learn there they never will; and it is in this matter of thinking that vocational training fails. A man may be an expert at replacing an inner tube, or at fixing a wireless in the home, or at mending a burst pipe; but these gifts do not qualify him to discuss the fiscal question, or the war between "science" and religion. A plumber with a classical education would never leave his mate behind him.

The growing lack of thought is already having serious effects; the present age deifies the trivial; if an American wins the world's ping-pong championship a cry goes up to heaven, but some flagrant infringement of the liberty of the subject by a government department passes almost unnoticed. Not so long ago we were told that some child had kept its "yo-yo" in circulation for a week or a month, or some such ridiculous period, and this feat was greeted with loud cheers by the popular press. The infant of course should have been soundly spanked for wasting time, and set to learn "mensa."

The abuse of leisure is one of the worst results of faulty education. In these days particularly, when hours of labour are lessening and when many young people can find no work to do, habits of thought and appreciation of ideas and arts are indispensable. If these are not acquired, the time of leisure is occupied by purposeless, perpetual motion caused by flight from the furies of vacuity.

In a society where the highest form of dialogue is typified by "Oh yeah" and "Sez you" (bastard transatlanticisms which should ensure their user's permanent accommodation in Colney Hatch), it is not surprising that the fires of conversation should be submerged by the blare of the loud-speaker. Anything to avoid thought.



"Now I'm worth 20,000 a year."

Drawn by Gabriel Aitken.

A person untrained in meditation cannot sit down on the river's brim and admire a primrose; so we have the motorcyclist tearing aimlessly from place to place, deadening what few wits he possesses with the sound of his exhaust, and leaving a trail of dead and dying in his path.

To a mind incapable of concentrating on anything save manual activity, the prospect of "an hour or two with a good book" offers the tortures of the damned in advance. How much simpler to go to the cinema; no mental effort there—all you have to do is just sit; the producers do the rest.

And so all these unfortunate people, whose leisure is filled with noise, restlessness and nonsense, are bound to deteriorate more and more; for as unused limbs become withered, so do unused brains become dulled. Meanwhile they are told by publicists how right they are—a statement which they willingly believe; in fact they can be made to believe anything if it is repeated to them sufficiently often—a phenomenon exemplified by the enormous progress in advertising during the last two decades. Consequently lack of a training in the humanities produces mental stultification in the individual, and a dead level of sheepish mediocrity in the community. Thinking people will withdraw more and more from affairs, and find refuge, like Boethius, in their own souls; while third-rate men of first-rate cunning will rule the world through their power of influencing malleable quarter-wits. Is that the *real* reason why Sir Joshua Bullion advocates vocational training?

P. D. G. D.



"A plumber with a classical education . . ."
Drawn by Gabriel Aitken.

HESIOD, AN HELLENIC PROPHET

By Mary Butts

Hesiod: *Works and Days*.

Edited, with Introduction, by T. A. Sinclair. 10s. 6d.
(Macmillan.)

One thinks of Hesiod when one wishes to be reminded of comfortable and enduring and reassuring things. Yet, if it were possible to ask him, he would say that his life was not comfortable and anything but secure; that never did a farmer have such bad seasons or so bad a brother, or live in such an unsuitable place or among such awful people, with such a corrupt judicature or in such an abandoned age. When he speaks of these things, of "the noise of justice being dragged" to the place where "our bribe-swallowing squires" want her; and what Zeus the Son of Chronos has in his mind eventually for evil-doers, there is something of the Hebrew prophet about him. But a Hebrew prophet touched with a grace that is—if we except the second Isaiah—in no way Hebraic, but already the signature of the Hellenic mind.

In his own primitive society—farmers and small landed gentry of Boetia—he is the nearest figure they produced to that of the reformer and critic of society, so popular round the left-hand corner of the mainland. The "*Works and Days*" is written to tell Perses, his brother, how to live as well as how to farm. Mr. Sinclair will have no separation of the text: "The cardinal error of the dissector is that he dissects along lines not clearly defined in Hesiod's time." Then agriculture was not science, as it is becoming to-day; and religion . . . ? Agriculture was partly religious, and magic had its share in both, and the divine stars were in the sky to tell you when to start reaping and when to cut the wood that the worm will not eat. Even the birds are the gods' remembrancers: "the crane who cries year by year from the cloud above, for she gives the signal for ploughing and shows the seasons for rain," and "bites the heart of him who has no ox."

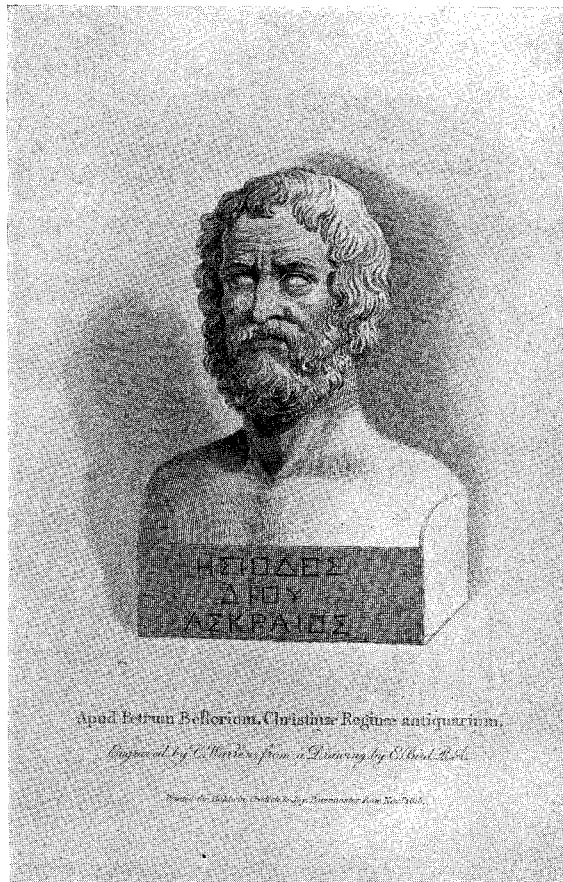
"Pray to Zeus of the earth and to pure Demeter to make the holy grain sound and heavy . . . when you hold in your hand the end of the plough-tail and bring down your sticks on the oxen's backs. . . . Let a slave follow a little

way behind with a mattock to make trouble for the birds by hiding the seed. . . ." This is the taste of it, the devotion and the sense of it. Mr. Sinclair, with all his scholar's civility, will have no nonsense with the error of some commentators who try to twist the sense of Hesiod into something like that of Homer, turning him into the writer of a kind of rural epic. But for the similarity of metre and the possible date, no more different impulse could have produced it. For it was not lovely poetry that he was trying to make, though he made it, nor telling an heroic story, nor celebrating pride of race. He was interested in two—not naturally incompatible—things: how to live well and how to make farming pay. For the last he gives us invaluable local detail, precise as well as sharply poetic, of how a farmer lived and what his home was like; what the world looked like to him, what overtones of imaginative interpretation he added to common things. The bad weather perishes all the beasts but the sheep, "it makes the old man curved as a wheel. But it does not blow through the soft-skinned maid who stays indoors with her dear mother, unlearned yet in the works of Golden Aphrodite, washing her soft body . . . on a winter's day when the Boneless One (the cuttle-fish) gnaws his foot in his fireless house."

For his moral preoccupation—and a great part of Mr. Sinclair's introduction is concerned with it—he was using the tiresome behaviour of his brother Perses as an excuse for telling men how they ought to live. All men—and at all time. Mr. Sinclair reminds us that, as much as Homer or any prophet across the water, Hesiod could claim to be telling what the gods had told him to say. The word of Aegis-bearing Zeus came unto Hesiod, and throughout the "*Works*" runs the theme of eternal justice, of which it was the poet's business to persuade man. Of which it has been always particularly difficult to persuade man—man who wants to win a lawsuit or enclose a neighbour's field. Against the more sensational wickednesses—lust and human sacrifices—no accusation seems to have been needed; nor did idolatry enter into the misdeeds of a people who made religious persecution impossible by

identifying other men's gods with their own. Nor is whole-sale oppression of a *poorer* class spoken of, where all were poor, and yet, it would seem, capable of imaginative life. Cheating and incurable quarrelsomeness seems to have been the vice of Hesiod's contemporaries.

How can he persuade them? In the old way. "The justice of the gods is slow, but it is sure," he says in effect; and there are "ten thousand immortal spirits that watch man," dressed, as he adds mysteriously, in mist. But to himself he seems to ask: Why does Zeus, the All-Just, endure these things—man's bad behaviour and violence and stupidity? He has no answer for men, who has his own answer, living the poet's life, conscious of existence where time is not, and continually in the presence of Zeus, his god. For human society there is a fear implicit, as his editor has brought out—fear of a reversal of values, when men shall say outright: "Evil be thou my good." It



Hesiod.

is then that the worst will come to the worst, which seems always to be on the edge of happening, which even to-day, though it looks like it, has not yet happened—the day when "their beautiful faces hidden in white raiment up from the broadwayed earth go *Aidôs* and *Nemesis*." Compassion—Pity—in its most magical sense, and *Nemesis*, whose loss would mean the reversal of that sequence in nature we cling to for fear of senselessness, the rule that any act, good or bad, is followed eventually by the consequences proper to it. For if we were *sure* that this did not happen, the way would be open to any extravagance of unreason in a nightmare world.

This, in terms of small, friendly and enduring things, is what Hesiod was concerned with, one of the civilisers of Greece, and so one of the civilisers of our civilisation.

LUCRETIIUS THE EPICUREAN

By Llewelyn Powys

NO great poet more nobly represents the Promethean madness than does Lucretius. For two thousand years his passionate sincerity has roused men out of their apathy and mistrusts. His philosophy—so simple, so deep, so penetrating, transvalues values. It frees men from cloudy fears and makes it possible for them "to contemplate all things with a mind at rest." For the human race has not raised itself out of the earth's heavy clay immaculate. From the first its power of reasoning was rendered infirm by atavistic animal timidities, and to few of us has been vouchsafed an heroic vision "beneath the gliding stars."

Poetry is a heightened awareness of existence, an intensity of conscious emotion, an intensity of conscious thought. The apprehensions of Lucretius were so vibrant that his poem still trembles with life, and the "lasting loveliness" of his words comes straight down to us without impediment as from his living lips.

It is remarkable how few didactic poems are entirely free from the taint of theological subservience. Of these "De Rerum Natura" was the first and remains the greatest. With what a splendour of indignation this great liberator of the human race regarded religion, and with what dauntless *virtu* his strong soul entered each gloomy cave of superstition to overthrow it "from top to bottom." He is the great champion of the earth-born, and he does not hesitate to raise his mortal head to outstare those two mighty intimidators—God and Death.

In astronomy, in anthropology, in psychology, and in physics he hints at, or even anticipates, the conclusions of modern scientific research. The whole riot of earth

existence was perceived by him under the bright light of poetic inspiration. No other writer can so stir us into realising how valiant it is possible for our souls to be. He brings confidence to our faltering spirits, and upon eagle's wings carries us up towards the life-giving sun.

"For not only would all reasoning fall away, life itself too would collapse, unless you chose to trust the senses." His chief concern is to rid human beings of their most enervating weakness—fear. He would have us no longer look askance at the Heavens. The Gods who dwell in the "interspaces between the worlds . . . where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow, nor ever wind blows loudly," are careless of mankind. They have nothing to do with what is happening upon earth. All comes about through the agency of natural laws. "Nothing is ever begotten of nothing by divine will. . . . And if you learn this surely, and cling to it, Nature is seen, free at once, and quit of her proud rulers, doing all things of her own accord alone, without control of Gods."

In accordance with the theory of his master, Epicurus, he explains that the ultimate substance of the physical universe is composed of atoms which, obedient to natural laws, by the force of clash and collision, come together in nebulae and finally build up the whole universe with its suns and planets. "For all the nature of the first bodies lies far away from our senses below their purview." Nature herself then is seen to be the creator. She it is who, acting by law but without moral purpose, "brings forth the fragile things into the coasts of light."

The soul is but a corporeal aggregate of refined atoms which at death are dissipated for ever, along with the rougher atoms of the body. Thus men have nothing to fear from the Gods either in life or after death. "What once sprung from earth sinks back into the earth."

But if we are in the grip of the inevitable movements of atomic matter, then all must be determined, and this in the opinion of Epicurus would be a worse tyranny than the tyranny of religion. His theory of the "swerve of the atoms" saves us from this trap. It is an hypothesis which in our own day has been revived in a disguised form. The quantum theory has been of the greatest convenience to pious men of science on the look-out for mouse-hole God-cracks in the floor of matter. "By swerving do the first beginnings make a certain start of movement to break through the decrees of fate so that cause may not follow cause from infinite time."

Surely, for a living organism, annihilation is the most desperate contingency. The very rats in our cellars shrink from it. Lucretius teaches that, once relieved of the fear of punishment hereafter, we should be able to face the inevitable with philosophic calm. "Death, then, is naught to us, nor does it concern us a whit, in as much as the nature of the mind is but a mortal possession." Finally, with contemptuous impatience he rebukes us for our querulous complaints. "Epicurus himself died, who surpassed the race of men in understanding and quenched the light of all, even as the sun rising in the sky quenches the stars. Wilt thou then hesitate and chafe to meet thy doom? thou whose life is well nigh dead while thou still livest and lookest on the light, who dost waste in sleep the greater part of thy years, and snore when wide awake."

What then should be the moral aim of our lives during the fugitive years allowed us? Lucretius answers emphatically that the true end of life should be personal happiness. Our senses are eager to instruct us how this difficult state is to be won. Physical pain and spiritual conflict disrupt the harmony of soul and body. Such disturbances are to be avoided by setting limits to our desires and fears, and by knowing "what can be done and what cannot." We must minister to the needs and desires of the body, but always within reason, and must preserve the balance of our souls by evading "the gloomy billows of care." When once a fortunate equilibrium has been achieved, then a natural happiness will become habitual to us.

We must protect ourselves against the more dangerous passions, against avarice, against ambition, and against love. We must with intelligence grasp the essential facts of life and, understanding what are the "limits of possession," accommodate ourselves as best we may to the human predicament. "It is far better to obey in peace than to long to rule the world with kingly power and to sway kingdoms." By a blessed dispensation what is necessary to sustain life is good, cheap, and easy to come by—bread, cheese, vegetables, water, and "the poor man's plaid." It is the luxuries that are rare and expensive.

For mortals, passionate love remains always a primrose path thick grown with nettles, thorns, and burrs. Even should its course run smooth it is our destiny, as we lie enmeshed in this golden net, to be tortured by unsatisfied yearnings. "But from the face and beauteous

bloom of men nothing passes into the body to be enjoyed save delicate images. . . . Even at last when lovers embrace and taste the flower of their years, eagerly they clasp and kiss, and pressing lip on lip, breathe deeply; yet all for naught, since they cannot tear off aught else, nor enter in and pass away, merging the whole body in the other's frame."

In the case of love being unrequited or frustrated, there are ills that may be detected even with "closed eyes." She has thrown out some word "and left its sense in doubt, and it is planted deep in the passionate heart and becomes alive like a flame." Lucretius considers that nothing is more dangerous to happiness than this kind of love that ravishes a man or woman down to the very grass. "Nor is he who shuns love bereft of the fruits of Venus, but rather he chooses those joys which bring no pain."

The true beauty and power of the poem, however, does not lie in these cunning, self-protective reservations, but rather in his broad survey of life. Though the poem's argument is scientific, it is the imaginative rapture of Lucretius, his religious awe before the creative energy of nature, that gives the work its prophetic power. The whole of existence is seen by him as a kind of epic ballad. From the gravitational stir of primal atoms creating worlds out of the matrix of chaos, to the lowly beasts of the field leaping quick from the "earth's wombs," all is impregnated with poetry.

Even in the light of our present-day knowledge it would be difficult to outline man's early development with more insight than does Lucretius, with more insight and more imagination:

"And during many lustres of the sun rolling through the sky they prolonged their lives after the roving manner of wild beasts . . . what sun and rains had brought to birth, what earth had created unasked, such gift was enough to appease their hearts . . . and like bristly boars these woodland men would lay their limbs naked on the ground . . . nor could they look to the common weal, nor had they knowledge to make mutual use of any customs or laws. . . . Yet never were many thousands of men led beneath standards and done to death in a single day. . . . Then after they got themselves huts and skins and fire . . . so hatred for their acorns set in and old couches strewn with grass and filled with leaves were desolate . . . then first the race of men began to soften. For fire brought it about that their chilly limbs could not now so well bear cold under the roof of heaven, and Venus lessened their strength, and children, by their winning ways, easily broke down the haughty will of their parents. . . . Lastly thereafter property was invented and gold found which easily robbed the strong and beautiful of honour. . . . For the race of men, worn out with leading a life of violence, lay faint from its feuds; wherefore the more easily of its own will it gave in to ordinances and the close mesh of laws. . . . Next, what cause spread abroad the divine powers of the Gods among great nations, and filled cities with altars, and taught men to understand sacred rites at yearly festivals, rites which are honoured to-day in great empires and at great places; whence even now there is implanted in mortals a shuddering dread, which raises new shrines of the gods over all the world, and constrains men to throng them on holy days; of all this it is not hard to give account in words."

To Lucretius man seemed a cowed race. He calls to them to lift up their heads and to enjoy their unequalled heritage as free men, living like gods with hearts unvanquished.



Parthenon, viewed from inside (Athens).

Photo: Boissonnas Geneva.

From "Rhythmic Form in Art," by Irma A. Richter (John Lane).

Love, work, friendship, books, and nature—these are the things that contribute to a man's happiness. It was to nature that Lucretius turned. Again and again his "flashes of genius," as Cicero called them, reveal the beauties, the secret mysteries of nature, bright and shining as with the dew-lustre of the first mornings of creation. He observes all with life-giving delight—"the race of shells painting the lap of earth, where with its gentle waves the sea beats on the thirsty sand of the winding shore . . . the cattle wearied with fatness laying their limbs to rest over the glad pastures." Nothing is too insignificant, too delicate to arouse his sensitive appreciation—poppy seeds "scattered by a light trembling breath from top to bottom before your eyes," the grasshoppers in their "smooth summer jackets," the small birds "that flit about and people the distant forests."

It is indeed most charming to think of this young aristocrat, so ardent, so philosophic, seeking refreshment for his lonely soul in places of silent country solitude during the very decade when Julius Cæsar was conquering Gaul, "leading many thousands of men beneath standards to be done to death in a single day!"

Epicurus in his generation is reported to have asked: "What possessed Epaminondas to go marching about over the Peloponnesus? Why did not he stay at home with a wool cap over his head?" Doubtless Lucretius was equally as contemptuous of Cæsar's vaulting ambition. He considered himself far better employed harmlessly wandering over the hills of Italy,

now tasting the pink centaury's bitter stalk, now marking a wind-blown snake skin sloughed off against the fallen branch of a hawthorn, now listening to the piping of a shepherd as he runs over the reeds "with curling lip," now tracing to their source the "gliding streams of water that wash the wet rocks with bounteous flood—yea, wash the wet rocks as they drip down on green moss." Twice in his poem he exclaims: "'Tis my joy to approach those untasted springs and drink my fill, 'tis my joy to pluck new flowers and gather a glorious coronal for my head from spots whence before the Muses have never wreathed the forehead of any man."

Sunt Lacrimæ Rerum. How tender Lucretius can be of all life, as though he knew that merely to possess senses is to cry out for protection. On all sides, life compelled his compassion. He was even sensitive to the trouble of a cow when its calf has been taken away:

"Again and again she comes back to the stall, stabbed to the heart with yearning for her lost calf, nor can the tender willows and the grass refreshed with dew and the loved streams, gliding level with their banks, bring gladness to her mind and turn aside the sudden pang of care."

None has understood better the pathos of that natural sorrow which is the portion of the children of men born upon the earth. "Verily, a sure end of life is ordained for mortals, nor can we avoid death, but we must face it. . . . Now no more shall thy glad home welcome thee, nor thy good wife and sweet children run up to snatch the first kisses, and touch thy heart with a silent thrill of joy."

What Have They Done Since Proust?

THE FRENCH NOVEL OF TO-DAY

II—Jean Giraudoux

By

Charlotte Haldane

In 1926 a mild sensation was caused in France by the appearance of a novel by Jean Giraudoux entitled "Bella." As a result of the alleged "scandal," I believe this book was translated into English. "Bella" describes the rivalry for political power between two French families—one, with whom the author sympathises, of predominantly scientific interests, the other with a great tradition of distinction in the law behind it. The excitement was due to the fact that the families were apparently identifiable as those of MM. X. and MM. Y.

It is superfluous to emphasise the fact that before the appearance and the success of "Bella," Giraudoux had already produced a series of novels, several of which were far more brilliant than this one. I have not read all his works, but if I attempt to describe the three I know best, I think a fair picture of his genius will have been given. His weakness is a tendency to repeat himself, not in matter, but in manner.

Giraudoux's public is like a Stravinsky public: select, faithful and intelligent. It is the public of the *avant-garde* theatre and the *avant-garde* cinema. It prefers intellectual stimulation to emotional havoc. It consists partly of those who, like himself and Romain Rolland, are products of the *Ecole Normale*, which plays such a peculiar part in French intellectual life that it is responsible for the expression "*esprit normalien*." For that we have no precise equivalent, but we know what it means if we understand the phrase, "the Balliol manner," or have mingled with the blessed who have taken a first in "Greats." "High-brow" is out of place here, since it has a bogus flavour.

The "*esprit normalien*" is of all things genuine, since it is connected with a special type of education. It makes a slight though well-bred parade of learning and logic; it verges on the borderline of pedantry. It makes a point of viewing all life from a certain intellectual angle from which there is no deviation, admitting no degrees of importance in human activity and dismissing the interests of simpler minds with a disdainful epigram. The literature to which it gives rise is supremely artificial, if you like, but also supremely intelligent. There is about it an ostentation in the choice of words, metaphors, allusions, comparable to that so frequently evident in Mr. Aldous Huxley's pages. If you do not get the reference at once (and it may be quite as often to Edward Lear as to Shakespeare) you feel an ignorant fool, which is exactly what you are supposed to feel. But in contrast to Mr. Huxley, Giraudoux and others of his type are perpetually on their guard against taking life seriously, as lesser mortals are apt to do. A good example of this is the death of Bella, which would be touching if the author did not suddenly pop out his tongue at us, just to prove that he had it in his cheek all the time.

"I accuse Germany of writing the word Bureau Büro and the word Cakes Kekes. I accuse Germany of attacking daily with a truncheon or of flooding with abominations the keeper

of Turenne's monument. I accuse her of writing, over Trossinger's signature, that Balzac is a brute, Racine a piglet and Molière a chancre. At the barber's I accuse her of shaving my lips only, though my beard is confined to my chin. I also accuse Germany of accusing everybody else."

"A nation so lost and unhappy should not celebrate as its saviour the model of happiness and wisdom," (Goethe) "a nation in love with death and extremity, one who was all life and moderation. For it is the destiny of Germany to produce only mediocrities to express what Germany herself stands for, and to give her geniuses to the world."



Jean Giraudoux.

Photo by Henri Manuel, Paris.

These two quotations, taken at random from "Siegfried et le Limousin," are typical Giraudoux. His style is "literary," allusive to the last degree; so is his irony. Yet it carries intellectual conviction and often expresses modern French thought to the complete satisfaction of his contemporaries. He is passionate with ideas, in spite of his camouflage, but gentle with people. All his characters are delicately drawn, handled with tact and affection. The conflict is intellectual.

"Siegfried," the tale of two cultures, is the story of a French unknown soldier picked up naked on the battle-field by the Germans. When he wakes up in hospital the Limousin, his real self, has disappeared from his consciousness. He becomes Siegfried the second, the new white hope of "his" country. Geneviève Prat, a French sculptress who loved Forestier, the Limousin, causes the narrator to go to Germany and to reawaken the memory of

"Siegfried," who ultimately returns to that heritage for which many Frenchmen have willingly died, but which none living can forgo.

Geneviève is the most enchanting of all Giraudoux's feminine creations—a woman who marries a man with whom she has nothing in common because they share the same birthday.

Although the story is a moving one, its real interest lies in the telling, in the cultural allusions and the prose-poetry with which it is embellished. When its author dramatised it, most of these had to go by the board. In spite of its success as a play, the real Giraudoux flavour was lost.

"Suzanne et le Pacifique" is in my opinion Giraudoux's greatest work of art, and also one of the most artificial books ever written. The technique is terrific. The tale can be summed up in six lines. A little French school-girl wins a competition for an essay. The prize is a voyage to Australia. With her governess she sets out. The ship is wrecked. The girl is the sole survivor. For seven years she lives alone, a little feminine Robinson Crusoe, on a Pacific island. Her first sight of European men is when the corpses of German submarine sailors come floating into her coral reef. In the end she is rescued. That is all.

"Suzanne et le Pacifique" contains page after page of exquisite writing. One feels that the author only set himself this almost impossible task in order to show how brilliantly he could perform it.

The latest Giraudoux I have read is 'Les Aventures de Jérôme Bardini,' published in 1930. It is not as perfect a book as the rest, but the writer who had taken Europe and Oceania in his stride could not be expected to resist America. Nor, if I have given any adequate idea of his peculiar flavour, would the reader expect a familiar aspect to Giraudoux's United States. Bardini, one fine morning, gets up and walks out, leaves his wife and child, and goes to New York, because he feels an irresistible urge to tamper with what appears to him his future, as laid down by destiny. In Central Park he gets off with a little German-American girl, another of those girls whom only Giraudoux can render as delicately and brightly as Monet rendered the Cornfield. Here is a sample from Bardini's adventures:

"The spring lasted eight days. Father Moeller had been able to find a mechanical nightingale, and had invited his friends."

Because he was a German for whom spring spelt nightingale, and this was the best he could do about it in New York.

"They were winter friends still, but with their gaily coloured ties they would make quite decent spring friends. As the nightingale sang it moved its head, then its wings, then its tail, finishing on one leg, according to the rule immutably laid down in Schreiber's Natural History, and verified in the moonlight by grandfather Frederick with the mother-of-pearl opera glasses with which one evening he had also checked the pouts of Lola Montes. But although the

gestures of the nightingale were correct, his song was no longer authentic, for the musical box had had to be sent to an American repairer."

The second half of the book is more frankly sentimental. It describes Jerome's relationship with a "kid" who has run away from an adoption home, and in due course returns to it. All Giraudoux gives you of America is a theme for a series of brilliant variations in the French manner; which is all he gives you of the Pacific or of Germany. Jérôme Bardini too returns home. It is odd that a man should be homesick in his own country. Not so odd perhaps in a *normalien*.

Giraudoux and MacOrlan, of whom I shall write next, can be appreciated most clearly when contrasted with a writer like Jules Romains, whose poetic sense is always at the service of his intelligence, whereas their intelligences, with all the rhythm, the colour, the sense of form which so strongly distinguish them from less original writers, tend rather to be the slaves of their imaginations. I have said already that Romains is the scientist's novelist; Giraudoux is the novelist of the intellectual to whom imagination sometimes appears more precious than intellect itself; MacOrlan, the Edgar Allan Poe of our times, has something of the other Edgar too—something to offer the man in the street: he is the Whistler of the criminal news-story.

Principal novels by Jean Giraudoux: "Elpenor," "Suzanne et le Pacifique," "Siegfried et le Limousin," "Juliette au Pays des Hommes," "Bella," "Eglantine." *Plays:* "Siegfried," "Amphytrion 38."

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CLAUDE HOUGHTON

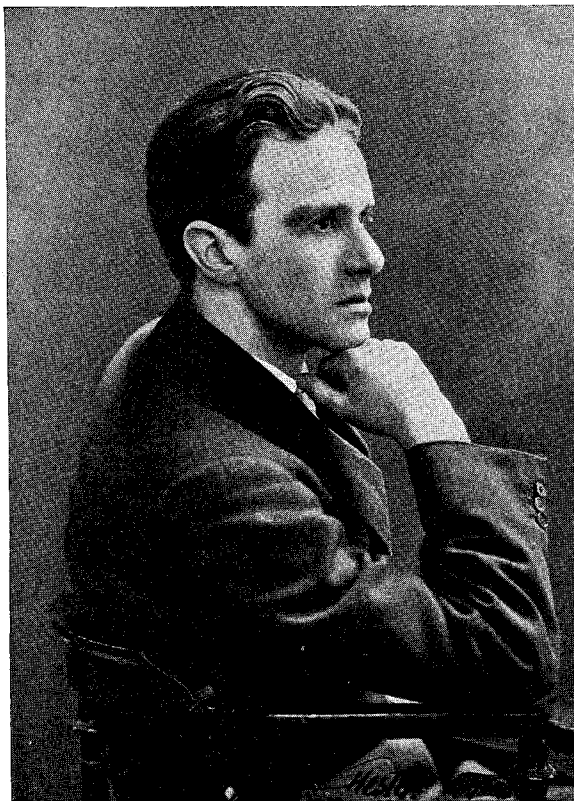
By Geoffrey West

Claude Houghton is a novelist each of whose books has received the highest praise, yet whose work as a whole has made no comparable cumulative impression, and who consequently has never had that recognition he undoubtedly deserves as one of the two or three profoundly imaginative writers of his generation. Imagination is the common gift of every creative artist, but one ascribes it to Mr. Houghton in a special sense—it is naked in his books as an unsheathed sword. To suggest a comparison, he has written nothing to equal Mr. Charles Morgan's "The Fountain" on its own ground; his work has not that richness of sensory detail which casts a cloak of purely earthly loveliness about that record of spiritual nobilities. Yet he is one of the very few of approximately Mr. Morgan's years who may stand beside the author of "The Fountain" in both aspiration and penetrative understanding. And he is certainly swifter in making his effects; he continually dares long shots that are justifiable only in their success. He can be gaudy in description, at times merely clever in dialogue, as Mr. Morgan would never be, but at his best—and he is often at his best—his psychological analysis cuts with the sure precision of a surgeon's knife. In Mr. Morgan we have the sunshine, in Mr. Houghton the lightning, of imagination revealing deeper realities than our own feeble vision could ever

discern unaided; Mr. Morgan's method is the more familiar (and not the less enduring)—Mr. Houghton leaves us dazzled, even a little scared, by the depths of self-knowledge he opens within us as we read.

No less than Mr. Morgan, he writes from a standpoint of spiritual—though never doctrinal—conviction. In a sense all his novels are the same novel; they say the same thing, though with infinite variety and ever-varying reference. Each in turn is an attempt to find a more complete and inclusive "objective correlative" for what remains, in essentials, a single knowledge, though it looks both within and without, has both personal and social aspects. Every primary character in his novels is drawn as, in whatever degree, a "pilgrim of an inward Odyssey" towards a revelation he had himself avowed before ever he published a novel, and for lack of which, as a general thing, he sees the world falling faster and faster into destructive chaos. "Where no gods are, spectres rule." That, in a gnomic phrase, is his diagnosis of the ills of the modern world. To understand it better one must turn to the books themselves.

But Mr. Houghton was a writer nearly ten years before he turned novelist. He was born in Kent and educated at Dulwich College; in due course he qualified and practised as an accountant. During the War he travelled extensively on Government service, and ever since has remained in



Claude Houghton.

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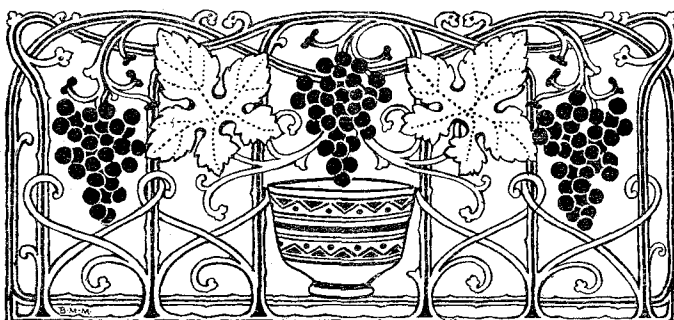
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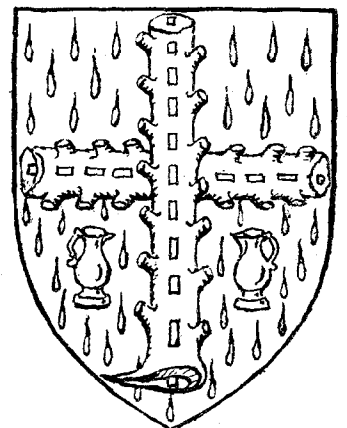
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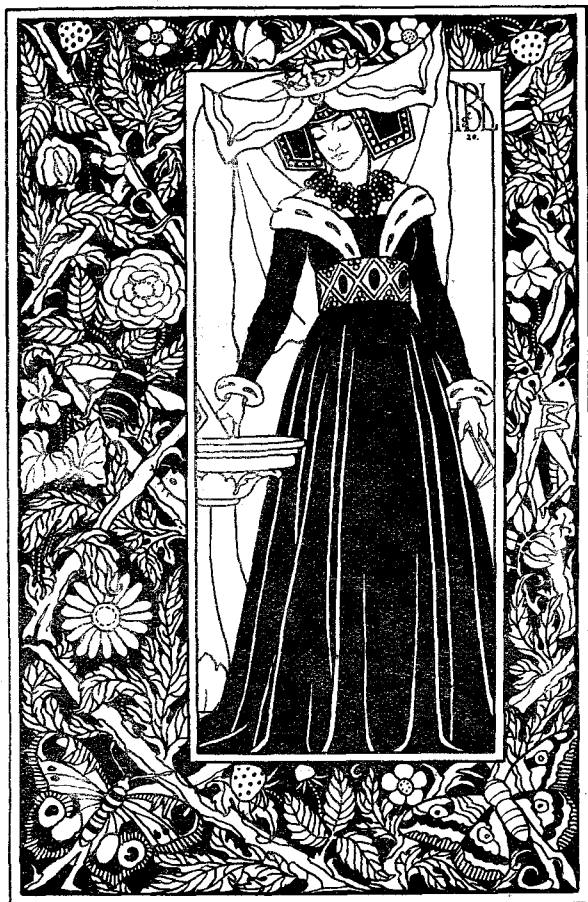
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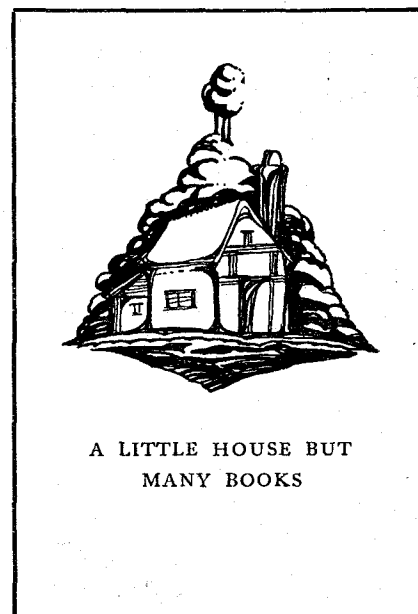
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official employment. He published his first book of poems, "The Phantom Host," in 1917; another, "The Tavern of Dreams," in 1919. These were followed by two plays in verse, "Judas" and the much briefer one-act "In the House of the High Priest," in 1922 and 1923, and by the cardinal volume of connected essays, "The Kingdoms of the Spirit," in 1924. "Neighbours," the first of half a dozen novels, appeared only in 1926. Personally I do not care much for Mr. Houghton's verse; his prose seems to me to contain the more authentic poetry. The verse deals with exalted subjects in language just a little too consciously exalted; with undoubted verbal beauty and dignity of thought it is excessive in adjectives, echoes and rhetoric. Even in the plays, which rise to a far higher level, a froth of superfine language curls upon the speeding wave of the genuinely passionate "argument." But "Judas," none the less, is a remarkable drama—some still consider it its author's finest work—of the betrayal of Jesus by a faithful disciple who, agonised by the world's suffering, seeks to precipitate the coming of the promised Kingdom of Heaven upon earth. "I betrayed him unto them that He might manifest His destiny." There are some extremely dramatic scenes, notably that in the chamber of Judas when the procession to Calvary passes beneath the windows and Judas cries aloud his faith to the frightened and recanting followers. The other play repeats the theme; it is less impressive as a play, if it sounds no less deep a note. From the first Mr. Houghton had written much of the mystery of being, of life in its material aspect as illusion or dream which must be transcended in a larger realisation. This is implicit in the earlier poems; in the plays it is explicit. "I am, as you," says Judas:

"An eternal spirit journeying through time;
The flesh—a cloak; my faith—a guide; the world—
A road on my unending pilgrimage;
A mystery 'mid miracles; a dream
Threading Illusion towards Reality.
... I am, as you, a Man.
I have but seen the death within my soul
And not denied that vision."

That is no easy thing—to see and not deny!

"Each soul must know Gethsemane. There comes
To each an ultimate issue—Life? Or Death?
All lesser things are not, and in that hour
The soul is pierced unto her very quick."

Gethsemane, a crisis of spiritual death and rebirth—out of these is born that faith, held so surely as to constitute a knowledge, which is manifested in "The Kingdoms of the Spirit." Its theme might be summed up in a single phrase: "The Temporal is the shadow of the Eternal." Implied in that is the need to seek the invisible reality behind the visible appearance. All creeds, it is declared, so far as they rise above idolatry (defined as the acceptance of appearance as reality), provide potentially the means of personal evolution from blindness to spiritual vision. The means are many, the truth is one. Such vision is the basis of all art. "Art is spiritual biography, or it is nothing."

I have already suggested that—spiritual biography, or autobiography—as the nature of Mr. Houghton's novels. In a very definite sense none passes beyond the knowledge of "The Kingdoms of the Spirit." What they do is to retrace the path leading up to it, and to explore the possibilities of the manifestation in the realm of appearances, the possibilities too of the failure to manifest it. The first, "Neighbours," is in many respects the most interesting as it is the most original, if not the most successful as a novel. It is a dramatisation, not quite completely projected, of that inner conflict of heart and mind that must carry both into desolation and wilderness before the fountain

of an assured vision is attained, the disintegration which must precede new integration. The narrator, who is the body of the life of illusion, comes to live in an attic, through one wall of which he hears the voices of Victor—his supposed neighbour, but in reality his significantly-named higher self moving towards higher understanding—and Victor's visiting friends. As the book, which consists wholly of these conversations and the narrator's comments on them, draws to its end, the sense of identity, and the denial of it, grows more intense, for men fight always against the truth which may transform them.

The other novels cannot be dealt with in any detail. "The Riddle of Helena" (1927) has been described as a detective story about love; it is that, but more essential is its aspect as the story of two men who fail of the vision when it comes to them at the hands of a woman, and of a third man who seems at least potentially adequate. In "Crisis" (1929) a man achieves under threat of death that sense of the wonder of life which Victor in "Neighbours" declared the sign of the truly liberated man for whom the commonplace, illuminated by vision, no longer exists. "A Hair Divides" (1930) portrays a man who from fear bases his life upon a lie, until at last, when forced to face and accept the truth, fear falls from him. Outstanding among these later novels, however, are "I am Jonathan Scrivener" (1930) and "Chaos is Come Again" (1932). The former might well bear as motto a sentence drawn from "Crisis": "Each of us casts a different shadow, yet there is only one sun." Scrivener is the light whereby the narrator discovers his own soul, yet to the last page he is known only by the varying response—the "shadow"—evoked by him in his various friends who talk one by one to the narrator. It is a kind of revelation by double entry, at once of Scrivener and the narrator. "Chaos is Come Again" sweeps a wider canvas. In a strange eccentric family the author presents a microcosm of modern civilisation in collapse because it "no longer believes it has a destiny." Where there is no vision the people perish!—that is the sum and substance of his wisdom, personal and social. He had suggested a somewhat similar family in "Crisis," but here the process of disintegration is "personalised" with extraordinary skill in what is at the same time an engrossing, not to say sensational, story.

For if his books are indeed, in his own phrase, "interior dramas, whose characters are not flesh and blood, but principalities and powers," they are more than that—his characters *are* flesh and blood. He himself has written: "For anything to be true in this world it must be made flesh. As I see it, a character is a 'state of being'—not 'a point of view,' like Shaw's characters." True creative writing is revelation in terms of character—*being*. Thus if he is a novelist of *ideas*, no less is he a *novelist* of ideas—and one of quite unusual qualities. He is richly inventive, he continually exhibits the ingenuity of imaginative daring, he has humour, wit, a memorable brilliance in phrasing, real spontaneity, and with it all both human and spiritual understanding. It is a tribute to his dialogue that while the characters in "Neighbours" are never seen, only overheard, they exist as vivid and charming personalities. He puts profound as well as clever sayings into his characters' mouths: "Real conversation is a kind of collaboration between two silences." "'Moby Dick' may have been published in this world, but it was written in the next." "Each political party represented only the greed of the class from which it was drawn." Someone has said that while there are mountains of printed matter in the world, there are relatively few books. Of all known living writers under fifty, there are few to whom I look so surely as to Mr. Claude Houghton to produce *books* and not merely "printed matter."

The Bookshelf

MRS. GASKELL'S LETTERS

By T. Earle Welby

Letters of Mrs. Gaskell and Charles Eliot Norton.

Edited by Jane Whitehead. 10s. 6d. (Oxford University Press.)

It was the habit of Mrs. Gaskell in later years whenever a new book of hers had been sent to press to get away from the grime and the social anxieties of Manchester by taking a holiday with her daughters on the Continent. So it came about that when her "Life of Charlotte Brontë" was in the hands of the printers she hastened joyously on a visit to Rome, as the guest of the endlessly hospitable Storys. There she met Charles Eliot Norton, an earnest American, then aged thirty but still in many ways undeveloped and in all somewhat uncertain of touch. When Mrs. Gaskell was back in England and he in America there began a very intimate correspondence between them. This we are now given, though comparatively few of Norton's letters have survived. Those we have are enough, however, for the only purpose they could serve. They suffice to define the position, to indicate his profound respect for Mrs. Gaskell's mind and character, and to show that with all his candour and cordiality he could never quite fall into the tone which so close a friendship required. The fact is that Norton had found neither his business in life nor a personal technique in writing, whereas Mrs. Gaskell was a woman of achievement and had the easiest command of her means.

The charm and exuberance of Mrs. Gaskell's nature come out in innumerable passages. Take this:

"I believe I am mediæval and un-Manchester, and un-American. I do like associations—they are like fragrance, which I value so in a flower. None of your American flowers smell sweetly (do they?) any more than your birds sing—now I like a smelling and singing world. Yes, I do. I can't help it. I like Kings and Queens, and nightingales and mignonettes and roses."

Somehow or other, until near the end, Mrs. Gaskell did continue to live in a singing and a smelling world. A pleasing enthusiasm runs through her report to Norton, both of things in her little world in Manchester and of things in the greater world to which she was welcome as the writer of her books. And she can appreciate enthusiasms she herself does not share:

"I think we got to know Rossetti pretty well. I went three times to his studio, and met him at two evening parties—where I had a good deal of talk with him, always excepting

at times when ladies with beautiful hair came in when he was like the cat turned into a lady, who jumped out of bed and ran after a mouse. It did not signify what we were talking about or how agreeable I was; if a particular kind of reddish brown hair came in, he was away in a moment struggling for an introduction to the owner of the said head of hair. He is not as mad as a March hare, but hair-mad."

She is pretty good at picking up a neat story, and this of Jowett is quite new. While she was on a visit to Oxford some friends of his and hers were working hard on a Sunday evening in getting out canvassing letters in his academic support when Jowett himself came into the room. They, supposing him to be quite unaware of the object of their eleventh-hour efforts, begged him to go and join other people in another room, saying that though they were busy they were not breaking the Sabbath because theirs was a work of charity. "Oh!" said Jowett, "I suppose your ass has fallen into a pit?" But anecdote is not by any means the substance of the book, or even a main attraction. There are things here for many tastes. Thus the sociologist may be glad to use in a foot-note Mrs. Gaskell's first-hand experience of the demoralisation that swiftly followed on the organisation of relief in Manchester for the distress caused in a cotton area by the American Civil War. She reports that within a very short time families she had known to be hitherto thoroughly worthy of respect could not even exert themselves to the extent of going to fetch the relief allowed them, but hired, at sixpence a time, those who would answer to the call of their name and bring back the benefit. English feeling towards America is naturally a fairly frequent topic, and Mrs. Gaskell tells of how when some friend of hers had been asked by workmen to hold an open-air memorial service for President Lincoln, he found assembled a congregation of no less than thirty thousand.

And so Mrs. Gaskell flows on, nearly always very vivacious, often exclamatory, seldom without a certain shrewdness in even the blindest of her social observations. That this correspondence, which was ended only by her death, should have so almost steadily continued without any further meeting with Norton is remarkable. The explanation is to be found perhaps less in her real regard for him than in the fact that he belonged to the one enchanted period of her life, that first visit to Rome, on which she always looked back with excitement and often with wonder whether she really had enjoyed so flawless an experience.

MARY KINGSLEY: An Adventurous Victorian

Life of Mary Kingsley.

By Stephen Gwynn. 12s. 6d. (Macmillan.)

Mr. Stephen Gwynn is to be congratulated upon filling a serious gap in the biographies of great Victorian figures, and Mary Kingsley, one of the most astounding personalities of her time, might well have faded into oblivion had not this Life of her appeared. Even now we cannot but regret that it has been left so late that many of her letters have been lost or destroyed, and most of those who knew her personally are no longer living.

That any woman, after a youth spent in playing the part of a dutiful daughter and mixing in the limited society offered by a university town, should suddenly go to West Africa, become the friend of the roughest traders in the world, and finally explore primitive jungle into which no white man had ever penetrated, and which was inhabited by the most savage and cannibalistic natives, is a surprising and wonderful enough story in any age. To carry through such a feat in the later part of Victoria's reign, when England was at its most complacent point of development, borders on the incredible; and Mary Kingsley appears

as the incarnation of a more robust and heroic past, making many of her contemporaries pale ghosts beside her overwhelming vitality.

Her adventures amongst the cannibal tribes, her amazing daring and courage when facing the physical danger of rapids or the close proximity of leopards, and the humour which made her enjoy her most uncomfortable adventures and call them "skylarking," are paid full compliment to by Mr. Gwynn. These things however can be read of more fully in Mary Kingsley's own books, and it is the character and personality of this amazing woman which is here disclosed, and a summary of her political importance, which was likely to be soon forgotten, that constitute the importance of this Life.

We are shown an Imperialist of the old and great school, who was too clear-thinking and unsentimental to doubt for a moment that if England, for her trade or power, needed land, she had every right to fight fairly for it. Against the emotional tide of hypocritical feeling which swept over England at the time of the Boer War—and still more alarmingly during the Great War—which found its perfect expression in the later Kipling rhyming about the

White Man's Burden, she was in as great a revulsion as the modern outlook. Yet her insistence that England should fight fairly and use no unworthy tricks in attaining new wealth, led her to give up the renewal of the one pleasure which she had experienced—that of exploration in unknown Africa. Rather than see England break her word with native chiefs who were powerless to resist her, she remained in England, using her wide influence for propaganda, and in trying to make a complacent land realise that the African had a code of justice and conduct which could not be dismissed as barbarous, and which was usually only damaged by the work of missionaries—whom she with one or two exceptions disliked and despised—or well-meaning anti-liquor fanatics. Her great battle was against emotionalism, which had replaced that observation of detail which had so distinguished our earlier school of Imperialists. "Emotionalism says: 'Mean well, be merciful and generous'; forgetting that mercy and generosity are only compromises made toward the attainment of justice, not in themselves justice."

She herself was proud of

"coming from a pretty bad tribe—slavers, slave-owners, etc.—but we had and have two virtues that in my eyes make us better than the Exeter Hall crew—though we were never in a hurry to tie ourselves up to virtue and we did not cant. I, sir, have a very lively hatred for those arm-chair fools who sit up here and play the cat and banjo with Africa, and call the

'performance' civilising the African and spreading Christianity."

Infuriated by England's apathy to look after her own interests while France and Germany were looking after theirs in an admirable way, and by her ignorance, which allowed her to irritate friendly natives, she wore herself out in a lonely battle against public opinion and the government, and finally laid down her life nursing Boer soldiers, while maintaining that England could only obtain peace by using no half-measures against the rebels, for it was a question of English or Boer predominance. That her work was not in vain is clear when one considers the altered spirit of English policy in West Africa, and that the English government did more and more take her advice of looking carefully at native institutions before changing them wantonly for others, however "Christian" and emotionally correct they might be.

This unflinching courage in saying what she knew to be true, which was of such use to England, was the core of her personality. Her good-humour; her delight in bad language; her refusal to ride a bicycle because of the danger; her unselfconscious wandering through primeval forest in a Victorian gentlewoman's clothing, and her offer to fight a suffragette who was impervious to argument, make this character, which compels admiration, into an extremely lovable one.

A. R. W.

SIR HENRY NEWBOLT AND MRS. WOOLF By Geoffrey Grigson

The Common Reader.

Second Series. By Virginia Woolf. 10s. 6d. (Hogarth Press.)

My World as in My Time.

Memoirs of Sir Henry Newbolt. 18s. (Faber & Faber.)

Mrs. Woolf is a pretty writer; and is it heresy to wonder, when reading her books, if she is very much more—if she is not in our time something as a Felicia Hemans in 1830: a writer that is of grace and sensitivity, readable, perhaps of value to-day, but capturing the contemporary secrets second-hand, borrowing the contemporary formula, mixing her sleeping powders by it with skill, and giving them to a public, a cultured, pretty-reading public that nods into acquiescence, and never suspects the nature of the medicine?

It is not capricious to link her with Sir Henry Newbolt. They meet at more points than the casual would expect. They meet for instance in Sir Henry's memoirs in a letter in which Virginia Stephen thanks the rising poet of the manly and gentlemanly virtues for a poem sent to her:

"Dear Mr. Newbolt,

"You must have been good enough to send me a post card with a little poem on it which gives me great pleasure—and pride. I have spent Sunday at a house where the only book was your 'Admirals All,' and now I come back to find this. Father is rehearsing 'Drake's Drum' for Wednesday. Thank you so much.

Yours very sincerely,

Virginia Stephen.

How odd it must seem to many now that Virginia Woolf, even as Virginia Stephen, once wrote a letter to Sir Henry Newbolt; but have their paths diverged so very widely? Mrs. Woolf writes novels for the cultured, the delicate; Sir Henry has written poems for the Lower Fourth; yet after these years is not the difference between them only one of sensitivity, of curiosity, of character? A big difference, but it would not be big enough to make Virginia Woolf less of a Felicia Hemans. Read Sir Henry's memoirs. You discover a man who fills the major part of his first volume with recollections of school and university, the rest with records of friendships and temporal success. A book written without vanity, with egotism, yet egotism without ostentation or commonness, a book in which the progress

of correct placidity is never checked by a judgment or by a thought, a book mirroring a man who seems to have placed daily life and poetry upon either side of a ten-foot wall topped with *chevaux de frise*. Read Mrs. Woolf's memoirs (for these essays are her memoirs of life among books, among characters and writers, who are the friends that matter chiefly to her), and you find unending curiosity, continual liveliness, but the same absence of thought (to be inquisitive is not to be thoughtful), the same urbanity, the same good taste. Sir Henry is dull; Mrs. Woolf is never dull; but is she ever more in this book than elegantly nimble, exquisitely feminine, for ever posing questions, which only the naïve, the enthusiastic, the unthinking can mistake for criticism?

The critic is armed with power to analyse and knowledge to compare. Mrs. Woolf relies on her senses. Now and then she sees truth very well, for her eyes are not seldom acute. Yet the way in which she treats all she touches as bric-à-brac, as curiosities by which she is intrigued, becomes most irritating. With a touch of the narrow fingers of a Lytton Strachey, but with a manner of more decided femininity, she will pick up a Jack Mytton, a Parson Woodforde, a Hazlitt, a Christina Rossetti, even a Donne, and turn each one round with inquisitive, sympathetic scrutiny. She will build interpretations on the least detail of their clothes, their persons, their lives (if it be coloured), before dropping each figure back into the tray of odd pearls, broken brooches, spade guineas, jet buttons and mother-o'-pearl hatpin heads. She will invent little novels about each, in her own novelist's language, and deliver in them the most surprising information—that Christina Rossetti was observant, for example, that Lamb was a great writer, that "Aurora Leigh" "still lives and breathes and has its being," that Hazlitt's only fault (because of which he quarrelled with his friends) "had been that he had stuck to his principles and 'not become a government tool.'" Again and again she will do the same trick of style till it becomes tedious. She will repeat it even on one page:

"Indeed, if we look at her a little more closely we shall see that something dark and hard, like a kernel, had already formed in the centre of Christina Rossetti's being. "It was religion, of course."

And then below (but not in immediate opposition) :

"But alas, this abstract and erudite man [Charley Cayley], who shuffled about the world in a state of absent-minded deshabille, and translated the Gospel into Iroquois and asked smart ladies at a tea-party 'whether they were interested in the Gulf Stream,' and for a present gave Christina a sea-mouse preserved in spirits, was not unnaturally a free-thinker."

And for lack of thought she will innocently propound this comment upon poetry and our time, writing once more of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's novel in verse :

"But the best compliment that we can pay to 'Aurora Leigh' is that it makes us wonder why it has left no successors. Surely the street, the drawing-room, are promising subjects; modern life is worthy of the Muse. But the rapid sketch that Elizabeth Barrett Browning threw off when she leapt from her couch and dashed from the drawing-room remains unfinished. The conservatism or timidity of poets still leaves the chief spoils of modern life to the novelist. We have no novel-poem of the age of George the Fifth."

No; we have Mrs. Woolf, the delicate sentimentalist, who disguises sentimentality in an affectation of depth, in sympathy, and in modernity of manner allied with considerable skill in the prettiness of evocative writing. One may be chary of putting Mrs. Woolf, to use her own image, in the servants' quarters, "in company with Mrs. Hemans, Eliza Cook [how unfair and ignorant a juxtaposition !], Alexander Smith, Edwin Arnold and Robert Montgomery," but even the boudoir is not where most novelists would choose to be.

And Sir Henry Newbolt? As a poet he cannot hope for the butler's pantry; and it had been better for his reputation had he never written this first volume of reminiscence :

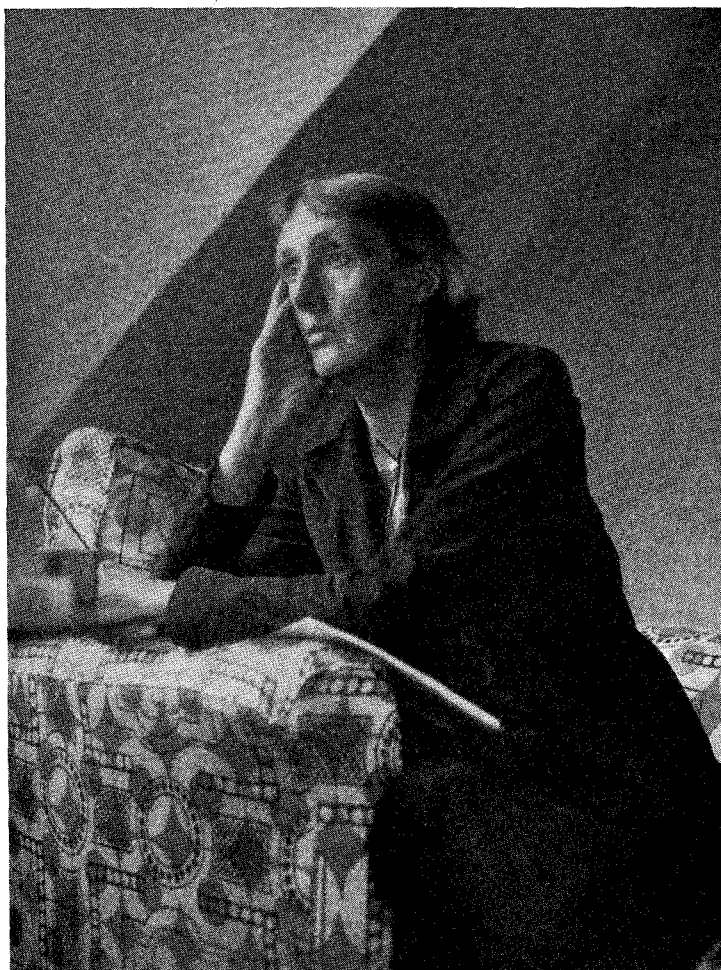
"I could afford to smile at the pseudo-Buchanan and his Beard [the reference is to a harsh criticism of his poem in *Blackwood's*], when I heard that men like Frederic Myers and Butler of Trinity and Leslie Stephen had been learning me by heart, and that in one expedition after another soldiers were carrying me in their knapsacks and reciting me round their camp-fires. The time even came when Ministers quoted me in the House and Bishops recited me in sermons at St. Paul's before the King and Queen."

On it goes, and on, a steady record of genteel success. A scholarship to Clifton, another to Corpus Christi, success at the Bar, "Drake's Drum," eminent friends, a notable editorship, more friends, patronage to de la Mare, to Conrad—all these mark the miles on the straight arterial road which in the next volume will end in a knighthood and a C.H.:

"My animosities have withered and my admirations have grown with time; that is, I think, a natural process, and certainly one most fortunate for me. But I wholly lack the peculiar imaginative memory, which enables my friend de la Mare to see himself in every scene of his life, even in those where there is no other actor upon the stage. I lack too the sensitive memory by which my brother had kept alive all the miserable as well as the enjoyable moments of the past."

Where in all this is the poet, the *perceiver* as Patmore calls him, the man of mission, pre-eminently endowed with the spiritual senses with which he sees and touches everything?

"Poetry Without Tears" Sir Henry heads the chapter which introduces him as a poet; but was there ever poetry without tears, or at least without sweat? And would one not suffer a dozen Virginia Woolfs, a dozen doses of boudoir elegance rather than one pinch of such incurious gentility?



Virginia Woolf.

From "Virginia Woolf," by Winifred Holtby (Wishart).

VIRGINIA WOOLF: A Critical Appreciation

Virginia Woolf.

By Winifred Holtby. 6s. (Wishart.)

Mrs. Virginia Woolf occupies a unique place amongst living writers, and is perhaps the only one who, acknowledged by even the strictest critics to be a really important figure in contemporary literature, enjoys popularity amongst the larger public. She exercises indeed a very great influence, and therefore a critical book devoted to her work is to be welcomed. Miss Holtby begins well enough with a chapter entitled "The Advantages of Being Virginia Stephen," which by implication shows the disadvantages thereof. The latter part of the book is devoted to the novels and Miss Holtby's admiration is called forth almost exclusively by the extent of Mrs. Woolf's departure from the traditional method of novel-writing. Between

experiment which is justified by the necessity of the story, as in "To the Lighthouse," and experiment which is indulged in for its own sake, as in a great deal of "The Waves," she makes no distinction. That is to say, she seems to be fascinated by sensations, ignoring their importance, their coherence and the fact that sensation unconnected to any serious plot is not at all interesting. It is the fault which characterises much of Mrs. Woolf's worse writing, and the virtuosity with which she can describe minor sensations has been her undoing, for it has destroyed that sense of their relative importance, which alone can make a valuable novel. It is this fault which has prevented her from ever again attaining the heights of "To the Lighthouse," however much through elaborate counterpoint she tries in "The Waves" to give structure and coherence to the story.

“THE ENEMY’S” SELF-PORTRAIT

Snooty Baronet.
By Wyndham Lewis. 7s. 6d. (Cassell.)

“If faces were made of wood,” the Baronet begins one of his descriptions. And anyone who has seen Mr. Wyndham Lewis’s portrait-drawings must have remarked that they appear to have been conceived in terms of wood-sculpture. Convincing “likenesses,” informed with a plastic vitality of their own, they yet seem almost to quiver on the brink of caricature—so far are they removed from the rose-tinted photograph of popular appeal. Caricature, however, commonly confines attention to superficial matters; it is just where caricature leaves off that much of the most durable art begins, compelling interest in less immediately evident essentials. The “truth” revealed by this means (which in literature becomes satire) is often of an intolerable kind. But in “Snooty Baronet” Mr. Lewis surveys himself, and some of his friends, with the same remorseless eye which in “The Apes of God” “fixed” his enemies: “I will dance a *pas-de-quatre* with the worst of them,” he says, and: “As readily as I would pick a member of the public to pieces I will pick my own self, bit by bit.” The snooty narrator, Sir Michael Kell-Imrie, is a recognisable if libellous delineation of the author as man of action, recalling Tarr and Kerr-Orr of the earlier books. (But with a difference: there is even some suggestion of symbolism about such details as the Baronetcy, and the mechanical limb: “I move about more easily in my crippled state than when I had my two legs.”) And since most of the rest of the material which went to the making of this book is already common knowledge, it is worth noticing how, as in his portraiture, Mr. Lewis translates actualities into realities—dislocates first-hand experience to reassemble it in a more complex and indelible pattern.

We know, for example, that the Filibuster is just back from Barbary; so the local colour (complete with “Islamic Sensations”) of the Sous and Atlas is here tactfully transferred to illuminate the Omar Khayyâm country. Similarly it is no secret that this Filibuster is attached (if one dare attach to so aloof a man so compromising a particeps) to a famous bull-fighting poet—and the satire is not mollified a jot in the account of Rob McPhail. The link between Bagdad and Bulls is supplied of course by Mithras; and his well-known fascination for anthropology, folk-lore and D. H. Lawrence affords Mr. Lewis the opportunity for some fine burlesque, buttressed with characteristic “quotations” from an apocryphal Lawrentian *opus*. And so forth. . . . One perceives that this book is as difficult to describe as it is easy to read: for the *asides* are everything, the “plot” next to nothing. Enter, on page one (or rather exit from a New York taxi), the snooty cripple. A cable from Humphrey, his literary agent, hurries him back to Europe, whence (after sundry misadventures) the two fly off in the embarrassing company of Val, a Chelsea Shepherdess, to Asia, there to accomplish certain nicely defined purposes of which the upshot is distinctly peculiar. Indeed it is not until the last page that the Baronet’s shockingly snooty misbehaviour is adequately explained. This is the Enemy who, peeling a motto from Plutarch’s “Moralia,” “arms himself with the skins and hides of his quarries”; and it is the pelt of no less a person than Professor J. B. Watson which he dons to pursue the boggy of Behaviorism:

“If you are a true behaviorist, and not merely a sham one, you behave as I have behaved! Put that in your pipes and smoke it, all you professors of this implacable doctrine!”

The book is at once a *reductio-ad-absurdum* of applied Watsonism and an astonishing literary triumph of mere observation. In defining by implication the limits of the doctrine, Mr. Lewis makes explicit the technique of his new prose. Everything is “externalised,” exposed on the concrete plane. “Snooty Baronet” is so riotously funny that it is almost certain to appeal to, and ultimately to be read by, everybody: everybody, that is, except just those (the Dr. Watsons of this world) who most need to read it. Seldom does a book so profoundly serious masquerade in such fancy dress.

HUGH GORDON PORTEUS.

Free Lessons for
New Writers

Interesting Offer to Readers of
“The Bookman”

Readers of THE BOOKMAN who have literary ambitions are advised to write to the Regent Institute for a specimen lesson of the fascinating and practical Course in Journalism and Short Story Writing conducted by that well-known correspondence school. Applications should be addressed to The Regent Institute (Dept. D/93), Regent House, Palace Gate, London, W.8. The great demand for literary work at the present day is indicated by a professional author and journalist in the following interesting article.

If you can write an entertaining letter there is the prospect of your being able to devote your spare time to a hobby that is not only the most interesting of all, but is highly remunerative—writing “free-lance” articles and short stories for the Press. There are editors in London who find it very difficult to get the right material to print.

Why is it that with the great demand there is for contributions the rejection slip is an all-too-common reward for labour? Because, just as a person who has an aptitude for music cannot play an instrument without learning the technique of the art, so a person cannot hope to write saleable MSS. until he or she is conversant with the few simple rules that turn the amateur into an expert.

The history of the Regent Institute is a record of unbroken success, due primarily to the fact that the instructional staff, composed as it is of well-known authors and journalists, takes such a kindly and sympathetic interest in each student.

The Course is extremely fascinating, and the exercises—practical ones designed to produce saleable MSS. at the outset—are adapted to meet each person’s special need. As a mental tonic it is wonderful; as a means of increasing income it has amply proved its worth.

If you are one of those with the urge to write you should communicate with the Principal, explaining your case, and he will consider you not necessarily as a prospective student, but as a potential writer. If you’re not he’ll tell you so, and without any obligation to yourself.

Post the following coupon in an unsealed envelope (½d. stamp), or write a simple request for the specimen lesson and the prospectus.

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A former Regent student writes: “I had always been keen about writing, though I had no practical knowledge. I decided to join the Regent Institute. I paid my fee, and before I had got to the end of the third lesson had refunded myself in full. “I finished the Course, which I found tremendously interesting, stimulating, and helpful. I wrote my first book. It ran at once into over 20,000 copies and is still selling. I followed this up with others on the same subject, and in four years have made well over £600. Last year I made £240, and this in the midst of a very busy life.”

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I shall be glad to receive the following on the distinct understanding that I am not committed to any expense or obligation whatever:—

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BLOCK LETTERS

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MONTAGU NORMAN

A Financial Triton Among Political Minnows

By
Collin Brooks

Montagu Norman.

By Paul Einzig. 10s. 6d. (Kegan Paul.)

"The question is," said Disraeli on a celebrated occasion, "Is man an ape or an angel?" With the substitution of the name of Mr. Montagu Norman for the word "man," that is the question which politicians of the Left Wing have been asking since 1925, when England returned to gold at the punishing old parity. Dr. Paul Einzig, Mr. Norman's first biographer, is, like Disraeli, on the side of the angels. In Mr. Norman he sees not only England's greatest contemporary statesman, but her only contemporary statesman.

Mr. Norman was bred from two strains of banking family; he was trained in youth amid the most conservative of banking surroundings; but he has never presented himself to the world as a conventional banker. In youth he went to South Africa and returned with a reputation as a good fighting soldier and a D.S.O. In his middle years he affects a mode of dress more in accord with the atmosphere of Bloomsbury or Chelsea than that of the City. He is a musician, a connoisseur of the arts, the designer of his own furniture and a collector of rare timbers. He rides democratically on the Central London Railway, and he does not frequent those "crushes" which contribute to the Press lists of "those present."

Before the War the system at the Bank of England was a system of short-term Governors. Each director in turn donned the metaphorical robes of office, and if he refused the honour he resigned his directorship as a matter of course and tradition. The War changed that system, and Mr. Montagu Norman has become the first long-term or permanent Governor. His tenure of the office has coincided with the most troubled financial and social period in world history.

Dr. Einzig calmly catalogues the benefits and disadvantages of Mr. Norman's stewardship. The charge-sheet is formidable, but the evidence of character outweighs the indictment.

The Governor has, says his biographer, introduced a progressive spirit into the Bank without loss of essential tradition; he has contributed more than any living man to the reconstruction of post-War Europe; he has contributed more than any other to the development of the science and

art of Central Banking; he has inaugurated the movement of co-operation between Central Banks, which has already produced favourable results and has immense possibilities of future good; under his guidance the traditional British policy of the balance of power has assumed a new constructive character; by him came the Hoover moratorium, and he has strengthened Great Britain's reputation as an honest debtor.

On the other side of the balance sheet are set certain grim items. Under his Governorship the Bank has failed, says the indictment, to take a sufficiently active hand in the solution of the readjustment of industry to new conditions; he has made Britain pay too heavy a price for upholding her reputation as an honest debtor; he has failed to take adequate measures for the defence of sterling; he has not always been sufficiently diplomatic in his dealings with foreign affairs; and after the suspension of the gold standard he was too timid and did not take advantage of the possibilities offered by the flight from the pound.

The purpose of the book is to support these charges and tributes with evidence and, where evidence is not available, with brilliant psychological deduction. The result is a fascinating volume. After its author's exposition, even the appendix, the evidence given by the Governor to the Macmillan Committee, takes on a new significance.

It cannot be said that Dr. Einzig is always convincing. The almost inhuman reserve of Mr. Norman, and his mastery of great principles does not, for example, add verisimilitude to the exciting story which the biographer tells of a quarrel between his subject and M. Moret. Dictatorial and purposely stupid as Mr. Norman can seem, he hardly seems a fitting protagonist to a scene like the quarrelling of washerwomen. Nor is Mr. Norman's character, even as this expositor describes it, such as to lead him to take a holiday under a feigned illness when his technical pride is hurt. Mr. Norman left England at the time of the acceptance by the Bank of the Franco-American credits; those credits we may believe were nauseous to him, as to everyone else. But there is no question that in 1931 the Governor was a sick man. The illness was not mere puerile diplomacy to mask bad temper and chagrin.

In domestic policy Mr. Norman's influence has been supreme. Those sturdy orators at Labour Conferences who would have him swung from a lamp-post are wrong in their estimate of his motive, but right in their appreciation of his power. True, as Dr. Einzig says, it was no one man's work to achieve the return to gold in 1925, but it would not have been achieved had Mr. Norman not desired it. That return was an error, not as a return to gold but as a return at an impossible parity, but it was an error with ample justification at the time, and an error which might have been none had circumstances remained under control.

Not the least interesting portions of the book are those in which the author deserts the high romance of international finance, and discusses Mr. Norman's views on more domestic matters. The Governor, as he freely told the Macmillan Committee, despises the cult of the Bank rate. The yelps of angry industrialists do not stir him when the Bank rate moves a point upwards or remains at a high level. The effect is felt in the money market, but the effect on industry is psychological only, and the disadvantages of a high or an increased rate are more than compensated for by the monetary stability which is attained thereby. Mr. Norman has been criticised both for having an affection for too high a Bank rate and for too low a Bank rate. In Dr. Einzig's informed view, both critics were wrong.

Dr. Einzig opens his study of Mr. Norman by a lament for the poverty of Britain in statesmen when other countries were fruitful in Lenins, Mussolinis, Poincarés and Stresemanns. "None of the Governments that have succeeded



Montagu Norman.

each other since the War have been able to give a lead to Europe, in accordance with British traditions. If, in spite of this, the British nation has maintained its prestige for its statesmanlike qualities, the credit is due to a man whose sphere of activity has been outside politics. This man is Mr. Montagu Collet Norman." The best tribute to the book is to say that, after Dr. Einzig has chastised his hero both with whips and scorpions, the reader is prepared most heartily to endorse that opening estimate.

HOW TO INVEST

Scientific Investment.

By Hargreaves Parkinson. 10s. 6d. (Pitman.)

Dr. Johnson is reputed to have remarked that a mere literary man is a dull man and a man of business a selfish one, but that when literature and commerce are united they make a respectable man. With respectability it is fair to assume the learned doctor meant intelligence; and Mr. Parkinson, a B.A. and—most mysterious of academic honours—a B.Com., a well-known financial journalist and City editor of one of the most famous economic weekly papers, surely fulfils requirements. This book is no disappointment (in spite of the terrifying title), which suggests complicated mathematics and occasional dives into the higher forms of metaphysics (and as Bradley said, "that metaphysics should approve itself to common sense is out of the question").

Contrary to the belief, the investor is not necessarily a "bloated capitalist," nor is he a wretched victim of South Sea bubbles. He ranges between a man with his own modest savings to invest and the director of large trust companies who deals in millions. But, whether he be large or small, unless he is prepared to take an active interest in

his investments, the result is likely to be regrettable. "Scientific Investment" will thus appeal to all.

In a short preface Sir Walter Layton, the editor of the *Economist*, draws attention to two valuable ideas which figure in the author's exposition; one is the importance of ascertaining the capital effectively employed in a business—as distinct from the capital shown in the balance-sheet—and the other the conclusions that can be drawn from the trend of earnings, as distinct from the earnings of a particular year, as revealed by statistical studies over a period of years. Another point, and one which every investor should read, learn, mark and inwardly digest, is a new technique for measuring the value of "equity" shares.

Many shareholders will heartily agree with Mr. Parkinson's criticisms of company directors. It is surprising how little is known of this body of men, whose functions and operations are shrouded in mystery beyond the wildest dreams of Edgar Allan Poe. British statesmen must frequently envy company directors their immunity from awkward explanations and security of tenure, for so long as a firm pays its dividend the average investor is quite content to believe in the integrity and honesty of his board of directors. Unfortunately however, when Ivar Kruegers appear that fickle jade Public Opinion rushes to the other extreme and accuses the whole directorial system.

Mr. Parkinson suggests various remedies, of which one—the installation of a Finance Director, with wide powers and security of office, to act as a shareholders' watch-dog—is well worth considering. Indeed the whole book, in discussing methods by which statistical analysis and common sense may be brought to bear on investment problems, is valuable, and the author deserves the highest praise for the way in which he has handled a difficult subject.

FRANCIS L. TOWERS.

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History

THE REAL NAPOLEON

By A. Ross

Napoleon.

By Jacques Bainville. 12s. 6d. (Jonathan Cape.)

The King of Rome.

By R. McNair Wilson. 5s. (Peter Davies.)

When yet another book appears upon a subject already so overwritten as that of Napoleon, the reader often wonders if the author is as aware as the reader of his temerity. In this case however M. Bainville states in his preface that "a fairly complete Napoleonic library should include about ten thousand volumes. For bare essentials at least five hundred are necessary." And in the future this brilliant interpretation of Napoleon will, one can safely prophesy, be one of the essentials of that library. There is here no new material offered to the student, but a task more difficult perhaps, and certainly more important, is attempted and achieved with singular success—the task of bringing that overwhelming mass of facts into some coherence, of finding the real Napoleon behind so many different and contradictory sayings, speeches and reports, and finally that of holding the balance between the many sides of his genius.

Napoleon was too great in too many ways ever to be robbed of that halo of the legendary, almost of the supernatural, which encircled him during the days of his great successes, which flared up again during the Hundred Days, and which settled round him more or less permanently when he had set foot on St. Helena. His very genius in warfare sweeps the observer off his feet and makes it hard for him to believe that Napoleon was not primarily that ogre, wallowing in bloodshed and war, like a virtuoso wishing to display his talents, which contemporary England labelled him. It is difficult to visualise him as a sovereign trying to repress a too preponderant military strength in his kingdom. The greatness of the tragedy during the retreat from Moscow is so arresting to the imagination that it is difficult to be content with the smallness of the mistakes which led up to this catastrophe. Here it is so much easier to charge him with sudden megalomania, and explain it simply by saying his head was turned by the glories of his former victories.

And again, the hesitation which nearly made a fatal disaster of the *coup* on 18th Brumaire, the hesitation which was one of the deciding causes at Waterloo, is hard to reconcile with that amazingly clear and sudden grasping of the essential points in any situation, which constituted his real genius. It is easy here to quote ill-health as an excuse, but the easier the excuse, the more muddled and unconvincing does the portrait of the man become.

Still, after reading this book, which is one of the most convincing portraits of Napoleon yet written, the old sobriquet, "The Man of Destiny," remains the best summary of that meteoric career. Certainly it is not easy to forget the phrase when reading of his youth, when he was possessed of no ambition greater than that to liberate Corsica, and was against his will forced to give his allegiance to France; or when we remember that France annexed Corsica only just in time to give Napoleon the best military training in Europe. And later on, when he became the one man to whom France could turn, destiny became embodied in the heritage of the Revolution. It needed a genius to divine that this Revolution demanded he should become Emperor, and to divine that there was really only one task which Fate insisted that he should accomplish if he were to survive.

The Revolution demanded that Belgium remain incorporated with France. From this single premise the whole of his policy, the seeming contradictions and the intricate vastness of his empire, grow perfectly logically. Napoleon realised this more clearly than anyone else in France, or indeed in Europe. It was part of his genius. And he waited on circumstance. He was an opportunist of so great a quality that he appears to be directing when only obeying, or at most exploiting, his destiny. The clarity with which he saw the repercussions of any event, in battle, in politics or in lawgiving, is what enabled him to rise to such power, and which at the end of the march to Moscow, and on the plains at Waterloo, crippled him with doubt. To these components of his genius was added that of the supreme actor, one who could stand aside and calculate to a nicety the effect which a speech or gesture would produce—an actor who upon St. Helena played so superbly that his life became an heroic tragedy, and a legend which obscured or distorted most of the facts.

It is the great achievement of M. Bainville's book that he has achieved a consistent portrait not by simplifying facts to fit in with preconceived notions, but has placed the emphasis so correctly that the facts fall into place and build up themselves a complete and convincing story.

Mr. McNair Wilson, on the contrary, simplifies Napoleon into a man who for his country's and the world's good fought a brave but unavailing fight with High Finance. That the unhappy King of Rome believed in this idealistic presentation of his father may be true, but it certainly precludes his having that clarity of thought and insight into men's thoughts which would have made him a worthy or even competent successor to Napoleon.

THE FOUNDER OF PENNSYLVANIA

By Hugh Kingsmill

William Penn : Quaker and Pioneer.

By Bonamy Dobrée. (Constable.)

Mr. Dobrée, in this full but lucid and well-arranged biography, has given his readers all the material necessary to understand the character of William Penn, the Quaker founder of Pennsylvania. Whether the material is sufficient is doubtful, for Penn's character is curiously hard to realise as a whole. In describing the only portrait of Penn certainly painted in his lifetime, Mr. Dobrée writes: "From his armour, and the way he wears it, one might think he would be a soldier; a certain meticulousness makes one suppose he would adorn a court; his eyes suggest that he would be a seer. But whatever we may make of it, it is certain that it is not a simple face."

Yet Penn was not one of those religious leaders who, like Augustine or Ignatius Loyola, turned to religion from the excesses of a wild youth. Even at twelve he was

deeply impressed by a Quaker preacher, Thomas Loe. "The knowledge of God from the living witness," he recorded later, was with him from that time on, and he felt himself separated from those around him, and from their worldly interests. "I had no relations that inclined to so solitary and spiritual a way," he says; "I was a child alone."

Remarkable men are usually nearer in temperament to their mothers than to their fathers, but Penn seems to have had very little in common with his mother, whom Mr. Dobrée describes as "short, plump, good-looking, free-handed and happy-go-lucky, fond of a frolic and remarkably untidy." His father, on the other hand, who was an admiral and a friend both of Charles II and his brother James, had a distinct religious strain, and was as much moved by Thomas Loe as his young son. On his deathbed he spoke to his son with an intensity of feeling which

reveals a more profound nature than William Penn's complaint about his unspiritual relations would have led one to suspect: "I am weary of the world; I would not live my days over again, if I could command them with a wish; for the snares of life are greater than the fears of death. . . . Woe to thee, O England! . . . God has forsaken us; we are infatuated; we will shut our eyes; we will not see our true interest and happiness; we shall be destroyed."

It is worth noting that William Penn's sister, Peg, took after her mother, and had no spiritual yearnings. The Penns knew Pepys well, and Pepys records in his Diary his flirtation with Peg, who was only fourteen. This resemblance between father and son on the one side, and mother and daughter on the other, suggests a lack of sympathy between Penn's parents which, if we knew more about heredity, might explain what is baffling in Penn's character. One thing at any rate is certain, and that is that he did not inherit his mother's vivacity and quick impressionability. There is no period of youthful dissipation in his life such as one would expect in a strong, handsome and energetic young man. "The glory of the world was with me," he writes of himself at twenty-two, "and I was ever ready to give myself to it"; but the surrender did not go further than an interest in his dress. "A most modish young person, grown a fine gentleman," Mrs. Pepys said of him, to the annoyance of her vigilant husband, whose sense of symmetry was not keen enough to desire a flirtation between his wife and Peg's brother.

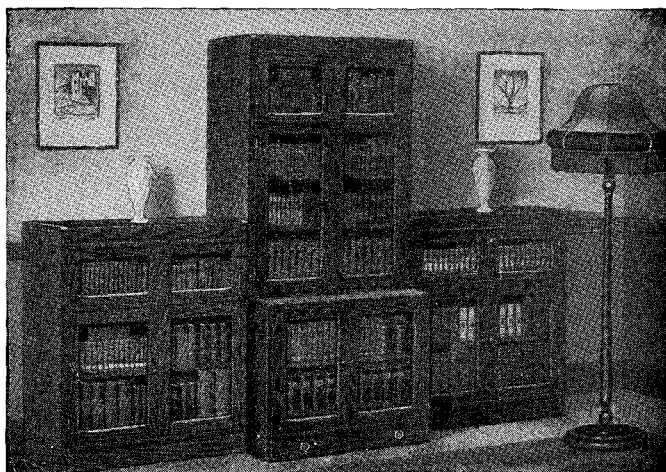
At twenty-three Penn was already a fervent Quaker, and he was not twenty-six when his famous trial at the Old Bailey took place. Mr. Dobrée gives a most excellent account of this trial, which was typical of the savagery with which the Dissenters were persecuted as soon as the Restoration of Charles II was sufficiently solid to allow of reprisals against Puritan savagery during the Commonwealth. Penn's coolness throughout the trial was extraordinary, and his retort to his browbeating judge is the classic example of Quaker wit in its perfect equanimity: "If I should suffer you to ask questions till to-morrow morning, you would never be the wiser," the judge said; and Penn replied: "That is according as the answers are."

Ten years later, his dream of religious freedom, as far as ever from realisation in England, lured him to the New World. Charles II owed Admiral Penn a large sum, and William Penn took a tract of wilderness west of the Delaware River in payment, and in September, 1682, left England to attempt what he called his "Holy Experiment." His aim, in Mr. Dobrée's words, was "to establish, not a theocracy, but a state based on the universality of religion."

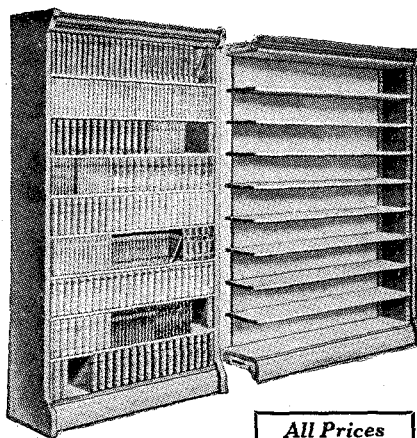
His Treaty of Amity with the Indians is, and deserves to be, the most famous achievement of his life. It was a perfect realisation of his deepest conviction that trust begets trust, and that force is not the final sanction of political relations. "The braves," Mr. Dobrée writes of the meeting between Penn and the Indians, "were in their full strength, armed to the teeth. Penn and his party, defenceless, walked towards the semicircle they formed." Penn addressed them, and when he had finished the Indians declared that they would keep the pact he proposed "while the creeks and rivers run, and while the sun and moon and stars endure." The Indians, Mr. Dobrée adds, kept their word as long as the whites did so; and the whites kept theirs as long as the Quakers were in control.

But the government of a state, Penn found, was more complex than the conciliation of savages by a gesture of trust. A long series of disillusionments half convinced him at last that the mass of men are not capable of regulating their own affairs. "Let the people think they govern, and they will be governed," he wrote many years later. He was still a democrat in theory, but unconsciously he desired an autocracy which he lacked the power and clearness of purpose to achieve. His feelings indeed were similar to those of Woodrow Wilson when, as Principal of Princeton University, he exclaimed: "How on earth can I make this place a democratic institution, unless I have complete control?"

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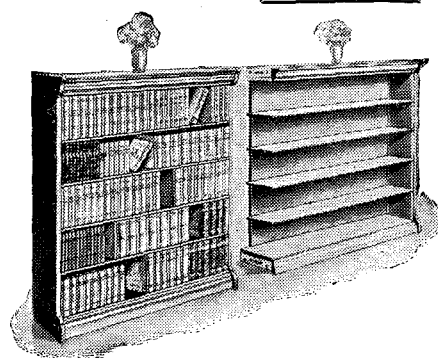
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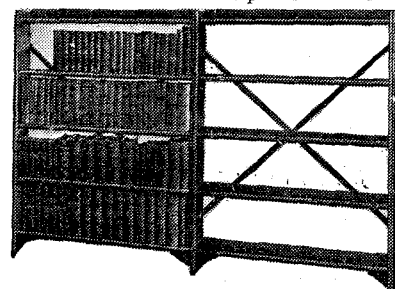


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PETER ABÉLARD

The Stricken Lute : a Life of Peter Abélard.

By Roger B. Lloyd. 8s. 6d. net. (Dickson.)

The love-story of Abélard and Héloïse is one which will ever be full of attraction, one which each century interprets in its own way. To Alexander Pope it smacked of the intrigues of the eighteenth century *salon*, and of his own *affaire* with Lady Montagu in particular. Jean Jacques made it a peg for his theories of education, while the Guizots, coming on the tide of neo-Gothicism, wrapped it with something of the sentiment which was then considered a sign of the Middle Ages. It was Rémusat in 1845 that gave us the first real biography. In England of late two men of letters have made the story their theme : Scott-Moncrieff produced his excellent translation of the "Letters," and George Moore seized upon the tale for the plot of one of his recent novels.

To these three writers Mr. Lloyd's study, he tells us, is greatly indebted, though he does not agree with all their conclusions. Scott-Moncrieff was a fine translator, but his introduction to the "Letters," interesting as it is, was not perhaps entirely meant as the work of a professional historian. As a novelist Mr. Moore is allowed concessions which are not permitted to the biographer. And so the present book is an attempt to re-interpret the story from the standpoint of the historian with a view to accuracy. It is not written for the student who delights in references and knotty problems. In his aim Mr. Lloyd has attained a great measure of success ; the book is very well written and the main characters stand out clearly. Here and there the wisdom of some of his conclusions may perhaps be doubted, but they are always ingenious and interesting.

It was well that Abélard called his autobiography the "Historia Calamitatum," for, looking back, he could only regard his career as a tragedy in many ways. But he never became a morose old man, indignant at the harshness of providence ; the buoyancy, the self-assertiveness and the self-confidence which made him into the "Rhinoceros Indomitus," remained to the end. Conscious of his own abilities and scornful of men who seemed to him smaller in calibre, he crossed swords with each successive teacher whose school he frequented. His retirement to St. Denys after Fulk's dastardly attack brought him no peace. His criticism of conditions there before the reforms of Suger naturally caused hostility. He began to teach again, but his book—not the "Introductio" but the "de Unitate"—led to a charge of heresy. Subsequently he was driven from his refuge, the Oratory of the Paraclete, by his fear, perhaps unfounded, that St. Norbert and St. Bernard were planning his destruction. St. Gildas seemed to offer a haven of peace ; the turbulence of the monks made its abbacy impossible to hold. And then, after a brief interlude as a teacher again at Paris, came the episode of Sens, where he had hoped for a disputation with his critics, only to find himself treated as a culprit and denounced to Rome as a heretic. But as he looked backwards sitting under his tree at Cluny, he must have been thankful for the blessing of the love and companionship of Héloïse. Under Peter the Venerable he found both reconciliation with St. Bernard and peaceful quiet after a life of storm.

There is another side to his activities which Mr. Lloyd hardly touches save when he comes to explain why Abélard was condemned. He was a logician of wide reputation, a theologian and, above all, a writer on ethics. Mr. Lloyd's account of his thought is not wholly satisfactory ; he seems to have passed over the work that has been recently done by Continental scholars, and he makes Abélard too much of an innovator. Anxious to defend him, he does not seem to appreciate the position of St. Bernard, and he does William of St. Thierry an injustice when he says that as for the charges brought against Abélard, some "not even the most prejudiced prosecuting council [*sic*] could read them into Abélard's work."

But the book has been a pleasure to read and to handle. There seem to be few misprints, though "Delenda est Abélard" is strange.

J. G. SIKES.

"MAIS OÙ SONT LES NEIGES
D'ANTAN?"

Sir Kenelm Digby and His Venetia

By E. W. Bligh. 10s. 6d. net. (Sampson Low.)

The orchard, early morning, in autumn : wet green and withered grasses ; mist ; apples hanging heavy in stillness—does not this "fourth" dimension, this "moment of vision," exemplify, stand as a type for, the rich satisfaction of a life rounded to a fruition ? An egoistic individuality, if not quite achievement, is a fruit of its kind. And any one of us may pluck that apple. The bold, adventurous hand perhaps alone is necessary, and if any man ever had love of life full to overflowing, without the limitations of a norm, or the angry reaction of mere unfulfilled desire, it was Sir Kenelm Digby, of Gothurst, Bucks.

Born in the year 1603 when the genius of Shakespeare was at its white-hot point, moving in the cultured and diplomatic circles of his day, he missed the tang of the wider humanities, knew nothing of the dung-heap on which the golden cockerel, the strange bird, scratched. But if he never looked behind the arras, he strutted well, a self-conscious mummer, before the curtain. A great figure—in his way. The "Mirandola" of his age, they said. Appropriately, Havelock Ellis has spoken the last, lucid word :

"That fantastic and gigantic Englishman, Sir Kenelm Digby, whose 'Memoirs,' whose whole personality, embodied the final efflorescence of the pagan English Renaissance."

He took all experience for his province (so he thought). All the experience, anyway, he cared to have. That was where his measure, his balance, his sanity came in. Epicurean, man of affairs ; yet an original, a naïve, he roughed the weather in the storms of his age.

Mr. Bligh has had access to unpublished MSS. at the British Museum, among other sources ; and he has arranged his notes well ; though these stooks of grain appear somewhat inconsequently spaced in the perspective of Time. He reveals, nevertheless, as a truthful narrator must, something of that light on sad autumnal fields that are no more. He does not dazzle or glitter : he is not even "bright." On the contrary, he has a leisurely, thoughtful manner of writing, and if his old horse seems sometimes half asleep, and Mr. Bligh nods, we remember that his wain carries a bulky load. A certain malicious humour salts the fair. And when the Cambridge History of English History "catches" it a little on one or two points, we must say we found the criticism stimulating and justifiable.

All the world has heard of Sir Kenelm Digby and his Sympathetic Powder, but the tale of his abandoned love for Venetia Stanley, and his rather amusing passion for "whitewashing" her indiscretions, is quite another story. His erotic romance (Private Memoirs), a work with much beauty in it, is an elaborate, an interesting, exposure of fact and fiction. In our mind's eye we see the perfect figure of Venetia ; and we see too, if we look close enough, the pail and the brush. It all seems much ado about a very small thing. She had one immortal friend : Ben Jonson praised, as a compassionate act perhaps, her body and her mind. Other lesser men, too, lauded her intellectual attainment. In vain, however, do we seek any specimen of her learning, or wit, or spiritual charm. Within what compass of activity did her intelligence blossom ? We do not know. Perhaps, after all, the report of this superiority was "much exaggerated," her natural beauty giving a flush to all their minds ? But "beauty vanishes ; beauty passes" : the enigma of the "tough-minded" Venetia and her faithful, faithless, lovers remains.

B. R. ROWBOTTOM.

THEN AND NOW.

As We Are : A Modern Review.

By E. F. Benson. 15s. net. (Longmans.)

It was close upon forty years ago, when I was sub-editing the *New Review*, that it fell to my lot to write to Mr. E. F. Benson and ask whether he would "do" us an article upon "Country-House Parties." Both the subject suggested and the choice of author were my own ideas; and I remember thinking it rather a creditable decoration in my sub-editorial cap when Mr. Benson responded with a lively, chatty article, attracting the immediate attention which articles of that sort always do attract from journalists avid for topical "copy." For those were the days of "Dodo," when the drawing-rooms of rural manors were fluttering with curiosity and protest. "Do people really do such things?" And "if they do, ought those who know to tell?" . . . "It is so bad for the shopkeepers and the servants to have such things to talk about!" . . . Faint echoes of forty years ago; they come drifting back on the breeze of memory, and once more the wind blows from the Benson quarter—a gentle, tonic autumn wind at first, stiffening with a touch of frost and winter bitterness towards the finish. For this "modern revue" of "as-we-are" is quite as much a peep-show of "as-we-were"; and, to be frank, the more distant the prospect the pleasanter the vision. It may be a weakness of middle-age, when the historian grows sentimental about the past, but "the weakness is so strong," as Celia says in "Iolanthe," and the sentiment so universal that everyone but the prig and the pessimist must share them. At any rate, they lend to the earlier part of this richly reminiscent and very human book a charm of maturity and urbane grace which vanishes all upon a sudden when the author turns his searchlight upon the scene around him. To idealise the past is more companionable than to scold the present.

Now the proof of every book lies in its effect upon its readers, and the individual reader's opinion is only of value in so far as it is sincere. Therefore, at the risk of incurring the author's assurance that the impression which the present reviewer derived from "As You Are" is, in point of historical fact, entirely incorrect, that impression demands its record, and here it is. The book then seemed to me to split into two divisions, conceived and recorded on different planes, so different indeed as to leave the record as a whole dislocated and tantalising. The genesis of the trouble may have been something like this.

Suppose Mr. Benson to have agreed that the success of that enchanting volume, "As You Were," justified the adventure of a sequel, to be called "As You Are," and to have settled down to his task with a relish. But before he could suggest the changes which have shaken the life out of the nation since the Great War, he must first set the scene by recalling the pre-War atmosphere, and there was no better opportunity for contrast than by turning back the leaves of the old visitors' book, and recreating in imagination one of those country-house parties, which remained very much the same for the first twenty years of the forty which have elapsed since he wrote that long-forgotten article in the *New Review*. The scene was no sooner set than it developed. The tale of the years flowered and multiplied. It assumed almost the form and proportions of a novel. Having filled his country house with very real and vital people, he could hardly be expected to resist the temptation of following their fortunes, and the fortunes of their house, through the years of ordeal in the War and the still more distracting years of disillusion after wards. The story grew and grew until the old mansion lay upon its death-bed, sold into captivity to make a residential club-house, all its children scattered, all its traditions outraged, "deserted by the race of which it had been the cradle and the home." The story had engrossed its author so much that he had made a little masterpiece of the record; but he had filled over two hundred pages before arriving at the sort of actualities which had made the success of "As You Were," and the difficulty was now to shift the scene and readjust the lighting.

That difficulty has not been happily overcome, and the last section of the book is noticeably inferior to the first. No doubt it will be seized upon and quoted freely in that class of journalism where every book is fiercely gutted for the sake of its "news-value," its "stories," and if possible its scandals. But any reader who respects proportion, urbanity and literary grace is likely to agree that, if "As We Are" had stopped short at page two hundred and fifteen, it would have been an infinitely better piece of workmanship and would have left a far more satisfying aroma behind it. The chapters that follow contain some vigorous, effective journalism, and a few rather petulant and querulous judgments, affording ready opportunity for the paragrapher. But the first two-thirds of the book are literature of a most fresh and delicate charm. They recreate in the pleasantest fashion a world that has vanished for ever, a world to which the next generation will desire in vain to return; where manners were suave and customs well bred; where Peace had time to rest under her vine, and the affections were cultivated without the distortion of botanical analysis; where men and women, even if they were simple and definitely limited, were happy in their own easy way, and spread ease and happiness about them. If it is sentimental to regret the passing of those days, let the world which has banished sentiment look round and take stock of the qualities now littering the space it has despoiled. If it is contented with its prospect, it had better consult an oculist.

The story of the parable house of Hakluyt is told with a completeness, an intimacy and a rare interpretative charm which no living writer could have communicated to it so naturally as Mr. Benson. He knew that world in its rich Victorian hey-day forty years ago; he knows it in its last faint struggle for life to-day; and he has in ripe possession those gifts of the novelist which fill the scene with a motley crowd of character, closely observed and naturally interacting in the compelling spirit of their time. His "revue" is a keen and moving entertainment for the hour, and it would not be surprising if it took its place among those records from which a world that we shall not know will refresh its imagination of the days and the ordeals which were ours. If that happens, the picture it derives will be both illuminating and true. Indeed I cannot at the moment think where it would be likely to find a truer one.

ARTHUR WAUGH.

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The Collector

RUSSIAN LITERATURE AND TRANSLATIONS

By E. A. Osborne

V—SERGEY TIMOFEYEVICH AKSAKOV (1791–1859)

Although twenty years older than Gogol, Aksakov was virtually his literary godson; for Gogol's example in realistic writing, and his direct personal encouragement, led Aksakov to abandon his classical exercises and discover his true bent in the realistic memoirs which made him suddenly famous in his own country, and have recently drawn considerable attention to him in this country.

He was born in 1791 at Ufa, then the chief town of the recently colonised province of Orenburg, whither his grandfather, a pioneering spirit, had come from the hereditary estates of Aksakovo about thirty years before. His father held an official post at Ufa, but on the death of the grandfather in 1796 the family returned to the hereditary estates of Aksakovo, whence Aksakov in 1799 proceeded to the gymnasium at Kazan. In 1805 the school, with no change of policy or personnel, became by imperial edict a university. So Aksakov's graduation in 1807 with a university degree at the age of sixteen, need not be taken too seriously as a sign of abnormal precocity. Nevertheless he had received an excellent grounding from his mother, the cultured daughter of a high official, who much preferred the company of her young son to that of her husband—a simple, unsophisticated colonial squire and a redoubtable fisherman. In 1808 he went with his parents to St. Petersburg, where he obtained the post of translator to the Legislative Committee. In 1811 he left the Civil Service and devoted himself to literature, the theatre and the field-sports for which he had throughout his life a tremendous passion, inherited from and fostered by his father. He became an admirer and staunch follower of Admiral Shishkov, leader of the upholders of the classical tradition. Under their influence he translated some plays of Molière and satires of Boileau, producing little that was original and nothing of merit. He married in 1815 the daughter of a general and, more prolific in life than letters, had fourteen children, two of whom, Contantine (b. 1817) and Ivan (b. 1823) became quite important writers and leaders of the Slavophile party.

After his marriage he retired to the country, living successively at Aksakovo and Nadezhino, where he devoted himself to farming and field-sports. He had no aptitude for farming, and found it profitless and uninteresting. So in 1826, under the ægis of his old leader, Admiral Shishkov (now Minister of Education), he entered the Civil Service once more, in the Censorship of the Press at Moscow (*etat.* 36). He held this office till 1837 when, inheriting a considerable fortune from his father, he was able to retire and live as a private gentleman on an estate he purchased near Moscow. He never again visited the family possessions at Aksakovo and Nadezhino, which later as "Bagrovo" and "Parashino" he made so famous.

About 1830 he met Gogol, whose stories were then beginning to attract attention, and Aksakov's house was a refuge for the needy young writer, where he was always sure of abundant praise and admiration. Gogol's realistic narratives opened Aksakov's eyes to a new method of approach to literature, and as early as 1834 he published anonymously a short sketch, *The Snowstorm*, which shows him completely emancipated from the archaic forms of his youth. In 1840, under the direct encouragement of Gogol, he began writing *The Family Chronicle*, parts of which were published anonymously in the *Moskovsky Sbornik* (*Moscow Miscellany*) in 1846.

He followed these cautious periodical contributions by the publication in 1847 of his first book, *Notes on Angling*, a technical work with no literary pretensions, which nevertheless, on account of the simple charm of its style and the delicacy of Aksakov's observation, was warmly praised. The book is the first work on angling in the Russian language, and went through three editions in his lifetime.

Encouraged by the success of the book, he put out in 1852 a similar work, *Notes on Shooting in the Orenburg District*, which was enthusiastically reviewed by Turgenev, whose own sketches in a similar vein appeared in the same year, and drew from Gogol the tribute: "Your birds and your fish are more alive than my men and women." The last of this sporting series, *Tales and Recollections of a Sportsman* (1855) met with equal success.

At last in 1856 Aksakov published *The Family Chronicle and Recollections* in two volumes, upon which he had been engaged for nearly sixteen years. *The Family Chronicle* is the history of Aksakov's grandfather and the love-story of his parents, and ends with the birth of Aksakov. *Recollections* opens with his entrance to the school at Kazan, describes his school life and becomes in the latter part a diffuse account of the cultural life of Kazan. The eight years coming between the end of *The Family Chronicle* and the opening of *Recollections* were described in *The Years of Childhood of Bagrov's Grandson* (1858). The success of *The Family Chronicle* was immediate and tremendous, and Dobrolyubov, the most influential critic of the day, pronounced Aksakov the greatest living Russian author. Thus at an advanced age (sixty-five) he became, with his first important work, a national classic. Encouraged by his great success, he continued to write voluminously until his death. He published a volume of literary and theatrical recollections and numerous detached reminiscences, of which that on Gogol is the best personal study in the language. His health began to fail in 1858, but he continued writing to the end and died, literally pen in hand, engaged on a novel, *Natansha*, which was to tell the life-story of his younger sister.

The Family Chronicle was translated into German and published at Leipzig as early as 1858; but until 1917 the only edition that had appeared in English was a poorly produced volume in green printed paper boards published at Calcutta in 1871. *Memoirs of the Aksakoff Family*, described as "translated by a Russian lady," is, I gather from the parts I have read, a quite honest but rather unpolished version. Mr. Maurice Baring wrote, in *Landmarks of Russian Literature* (1915): "There is no book in Russian which, for its entrancing interest as well as for its historical value, so richly deserves translation into English; only such a translation should be made by a stylist—that is, by a man who knows how to speak and write his mother tongue perspicuously and simply." This has been done by Mr. J. D. Duff, who has translated the three parts of the Aksakov memoirs *in extenso*. In 1916 appeared *Years of Childhood*, the middle volume, with an appendix which gives a translation of a short story or fairy-tale, *The Scarlet Flower*, one of the few pieces of pure fiction by Aksakov extant. In the following year were published *A Russian Gentleman* and *A Russian Schoolboy*—translations of *The Family Chronicle* and *Recollections* respectively. In an appendix to *A Russian Schoolboy* appears *Butterfly Collecting, An Episode of College Life*, the last completed writing of Aksakov, published six months after his death and one of the most charming things he wrote. Mr. Duff's three volumes are now obtainable in *The World's Classics*.

The Family Chronicle in the *Broadway Translations* published by Messrs. Routledge (1924) is translated by Mr. M. C. Beverley, and has an introduction by Prince Mirsky. This edition gives *The Family Chronicle in extenso*, three chapters from *Years of Childhood* and the first three chapters of *Recollections*.

Mr. Arthur Ransome, in *Rod and Line* (1929) translated the numerous extracts from the memoirs which relate to fishing, and connects them with an interesting running commentary which supplies the outlines of the narrative.

At the end he translates the several passages from *Notes on Angling*, which he thinks may be of interest and use to English anglers.

CHRONOLOGY

1871. "Memoirs of the Aksakoff Family." Translated by a Russian Lady. (*Englishman Press*.) Calcutta. Translation of *The Family Chronicle*. (1856).
1916. "Years of Childhood." Translated by J. D. Duff. (Arnold.) Translation of *The Years of Childhood of Bagrov's Grandson* (1858).
1917. "A Russian Gentleman." Translated by J. D. Duff. (Arnold.) Translation of *The Family Chronicle*.
1917. "A Russian Schoolboy." Translated by J. D. Duff. (Arnold.) Translation of *Recollections* (1856).
1924. "Chronicles of a Russian Family." Translated by M. C. Beverley. With an introduction by Prince Mirsky. Broadway Translations. (Routledge.)
1929. Ransome (Arthur M.): "Rod and Line." Together with "Aksakov on Fishing." (Jonathan Cape.)

N.B.—The three volumes translated by Mr. J. D. Duff were published with corrections and revisions in "The World's Classics" (1923-24).

ANNOTATED LIST OF RECENT BOOKS FOR THE COLLECTOR

By Denis Botterill

1. Rosamond Lehmann: "Invitation to the Waltz." (Chatto & Windus.)
2. H. E. Bates: "The Fallow Lane." (Jonathan Cape.)
3. Romilly John: "Seventh Child." (Heinemann.)
4. John Drinkwater: "Discovery." (Ernest Benn.)
5. Evelyn Waugh: "Black Mischief." (Chapman & Hall.)
6. Francis Watson: "Trinc." (Dickson.)
7. Rudyard Kipling: "Limits and Renewals." (Macmillan.)
8. A. G. Street: "Strawberry Roan." (Faber & Faber.)
9. Noel Coward: "Spangled Unicorn." (Hutchinson.)

Autumn always brings me a spate of good, and in this case important novels. I give pride of place to Miss Lehmann's "Invitation to the Waltz" unhesitatingly, and no amount of detraction by the very biased, or overpraise by professional boosters, shakes my certainty. I will even risk the anger of Miss Austen's admirers by mentioning her in the same paragraph.

I have proclaimed Mr. Bates a very fine novelist times without count. "The Fallow Land" is extremely good. Twenty years hence even *littérateurs* in the Midlands will have heard of him.

Romilly John's "The Seventh Child" is one of the most delicately convincing early-autobiographies I have read. Mr. Drinkwater is less interesting and less important, but as a document describing the slow awakening to literature it is almost without parallel. Detractors might call it tragic.

Mr. Evelyn Waugh distresses me. So much cleverness—a modicum of wit—a best-seller style—"Black Mischief." And yet the book is outstanding.

Mr. Watson's "Trinc" did more than amuse me. He evidently intended a best-seller, but he will have to be far less brilliant if he is to succeed.

For the rest, the Master's "Limits and Renewals" was accidentally omitted from my last list, Mr. Street's "Strawberry Roan" is distinctly good, and I have heard of people being amused by Noel Coward. Martin Tupper was quite famous in his own time.

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GARDENING BOOKS TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

Although we owed so much to Italian influence in gardening in early days, no English translation was made of the most important treatise on agriculture and gardening written during the Middle Ages—Pietro Crescenzi's "Opus Ruralium Commodorum," nor of any sixteenth or seventeenth century Italian gardening book. Yet Italian



Henry Lyte of Lytes Carey, the Elizabethan translator of Dodoens's *Cruydtboeck*.

From the picture in the possession of Major Maxwell Lyte.

influence was paramount in Elizabeth's reign, the Queen herself spoke the language fluently, and every young man of standing was sent to Italy to complete his education. The number of books translated from Italian into English before 1600 was large—about two hundred, on subjects ranging from theology to cookery, but no Italian gardening book was translated. Incidentally Falda's "Li Giardini di Roma" is a remarkable contemporary record of the gardens in and near Rome which must have been familiar to the majority of English travellers in those days.

Books translated from French and Dutch sources however were evidently popular, judging from the number of editions through which most of them went. So far as is known the earliest was Leonard Mascall's "Booke of the arte and manner how to plante and graffe . . . by one of the Abbey of Saint Vincent in Fraunce . . . with an addition of certaine Dutch practises" (1572). With the exception of the "Dutch practises," the book is a translation of David Brossard's "L'Art et Manière de semer et faire Pepinières," and Mascall dedicated the translation to "my very good Lorde, Sir John Pawlet, Knight, Lord S. John." The epistle dedicatory to the reader is charming, exhorting him to "leave off from all wanton games and ydle pastimes," to work for the good of all, "that God may be glorified, prayesd and honoured in all our workes of planting." Mascall came of a family said to have established themselves in Sussex shortly after the Conquest and there is still a farm called "Mascall's." The name is supposed to be a corruption of the Norman "Marescal," and members of the family were sheriffs of the county in the reigns of Richard Cœur de Lion and John. The most interesting feature of Mascall's book is the beautiful old gardening prayer, which the author quotes:

"And whensoever ye shall plant or graffe it shall be mete and good for you to saye as foloweth.

"In the name of God the Father, the Sonne and the Holy Ghost, Amen. Increase and multiplye and replenishe the earth: and saye the Lordes Prayer, then say: Lord God heare my prayer and let this my desire of thee be hearde. The holy spirite of God which hath created all things for man and hath given them for our comfort, in thy name O Lorde, we set, plant and graffe desiring that by thy mighty power they maye encrease, and multiply uppon the earth, in bearing plenty of fruite, and the profite and comfort of all thy faithful people, thorow Christe our Lorde. Amen."

So far as I have been able to discover this is the only one of the old gardening prayers that has been preserved.

Five years later Barnaby Googe, the minor poet, published his translation of Conrad Heresbach's "Four Books of Husbandry" (1577). In common with many other manuals of this period the book is written throughout in very lively dialogue. It affords an entertaining picture of a quiet country house of the period. When the scene opens, Cono (the host), his wife and servant hear "a neighing and trampling," and Rigo, a friend from the Court, is announced. He congratulates Cono on his good fortune in escaping "the troubles and turmoils" of the Court, and subsequently they go all over the house and property—the mill, the summer-house, the barns, the fowl-yard, the outhouses and the kitchen. Rigo is a delightful guest, deeply interested in everything, and he even notices that the hole in the kitchen ceiling has been mended since his last visit. The gardening section is also in dialogue form, but, alas! we lose sight of Cono and Rigo, the dialogue being transferred for some unexplained reason to two characters named Marius and Thrasylbulus, the former being an intolerably dull, prosy person. I do not know any modern gardening book written in dialogue fashion, but it would be difficult to compete with the quaint charm of the old books written in this manner.

The most important translation of the sixteenth century was of course Lyte's "Nieuwe Herball" (1578), "first set forth in the Doutche or Almaine tongue by that learned D. Rembert Dodoens, Physition to the Emperour . . . imprinted at Antwerp by Henry Loë and are to be solde at London in Paul's churchyarde by Gerard Dewes." This fine book, commonly known as "Lyte's Dodoens," was translated from the French version by Charles de l'Escluse. Incidentally it is interesting to remember that on one of his visits to England this great French botanist met Sir Francis Drake, who gave him plants from the New World. Lyte's own copy of de l'Escluse's French version is now in the British Museum, and on the title page is the quaint inscription: "Henry Lyte taught me to speak English." The book is full of MS. notes and references to Turner's herbal. The illustrations are a noted feature of Lyte's book and are to a large extent printed from the same blocks as those in the octavo edition (1545) of Fuch's magnificent herbal. Lyte dedicated his book to Queen Elizabeth, "as the best token of love and diligence that I am at this time able to shew . . . and doubtless if my skill in the translation were answerable to the worthy nesse eyther of the Historie itselfe or of the Authors thereof I doubt not but I should be thought to have honoured your Maiestie with an acceptable present." The preface is dated from "my poore house at Lytes carie within your Maiesties Countie of Somerset the first day of Januarie MDLXXVII." The illustration reproduced herewith is a photo kindly given me by Major Maxwell-Lyte, a direct descendant of the distinguished botanist, of a beautiful miniature painting of Henry Lyte. The miniature is inscribed "Henry Lyte of Lytes Carey, 1578."

The rarest treasures in the way of translations are three small books written during the last decade of the sixteenth century. Until about a year ago there was only one known copy of "A Short Instruction for al those that delight in Gardening" (1592), this being the copy in the Marquis of Crewe's library. Ames mentions an edition of 1591, but he had not seen a copy. Last year however a copy of this edition came into the market and fetched £70. This is the only gardening book I know in which

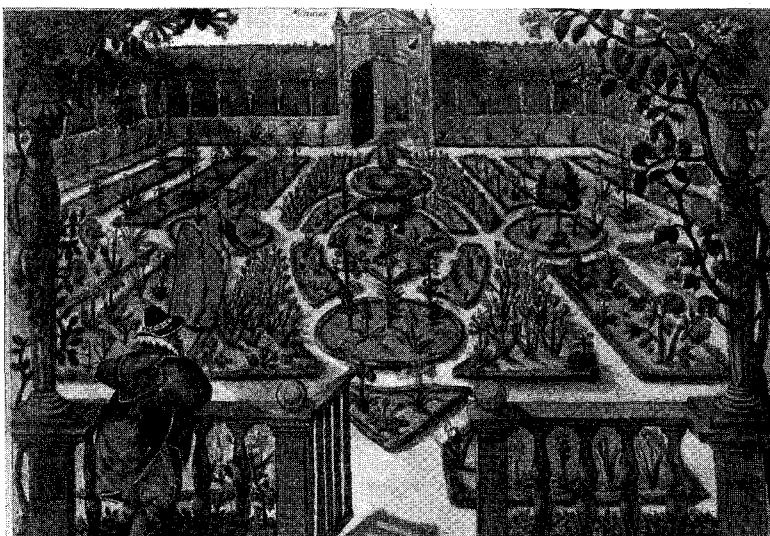
AND DUTCH

By Eleanour Sinclair Rohde

the instruction is given to make the sign of the cross when planting—"Coleworts white and greene must be sown in February or March in an old moon and in such a sygne X it is good to replant them." The illustrations are similar to those in Hyll's works. Another small manual, "The Orchard and the Garden" (1597), is also excessively rare. The second edition is dated 1602.

The most popular gardening book translated into our language in the seventeenth century was "Maison Rustique or the Countrey Farme" (1600). The original French book was the joint work of Charles Estienne, the distinguished French physician and member of the well-known family of printers, and his son-in-law, Jean Liebault. It was the most important of the early French treatises on agriculture and gardening, was first translated into English by Richard Surfleet (described on the title page as "Practioner in Physicke") and subsequently by that versatile enthusiast, Gervase Markham. The book is full of delightful word-pictures of a French sixteenth century estate, with its pleasure garden and fountain, its kitchen garden with arbours, its labyrinth, its orchard and physic garden, its beehives, and most charming of all perhaps "the nosegay garden," where they grew the flowers used for nosegays and garlands.

The most important book translated was Crispin de Passe's famous volume—"A Garden of Flowers . . . Faithfully & truly translated out of the Netherlandish originall into English" (1615). This is one of the treasures of early garden literature, the tulip plates vary considerably in number, but it is scarcely possible to obtain any copy for less than £100. The "Hortus Floridus," as the original book was called, is generally acknowledged to be the finest



Dutch Garden

From "A Garden of Flowers" (1615), by Crispin de Passe.

book of plant engravings published during the seventeenth century. Crispin de Passe the younger came of a family of celebrated engravers and he was only twenty-five when he published this magnificent book. The first part—The Spring Garden—contains a collection of engravings of spring flowers, and the second part engravings of the later flowering plants. The tulip plates are naturally the most interesting, for tulips were then a comparatively recent introduction. The book is a series of illustrations, but the practical handbook for tulip growers was a much later volume, by Henry van Oosten, translated into English and published in 1703, "The Dutch Gardener."

TIME UNREGAINED: Memories of Childhood

A Victorian Childhood.

By Annabel Huth Jackson. 6s. (Methuen.)

Eternity in an Hour.

By Vernon Knowles. 6s. (Collins.)

Nostalgia, says the dictionary, is the disease of homesickness. And there is no nostalgia comparable to the sickness for the home, the country, the little world wherein we were born and had our earliest awakenings. Literature, from Shakespeare's "When and I was but a little tiny boy" to Hood's maudlin "I remember, I remember," is full of it; and some of the world's loveliest songs, like Brahms's "O wüsst ich doch," sing of it. For in all the many loves of a lifetime there is no love to touch it for purity and idealism. We were all explorers then, and the world came to life under our eyes with a vividness, a frankness, a brightness it was never to know again. Not yet had we become the disillusioned creatures time has since made of us; disbelief could not dim our eager eyesight, for we knew then that all things were possible. Youth is a peak in Darien whereto all of us have climbed; and no vision of after-years can compare with what we saw then, when every morning was as the first morning of time, and every sensation a discovery infinite in its possibilities. We saw things as they were, clear-edged, objective, bright and unclouded by any sense of vague moralities. Responsibility had not yet coloured all our actions with hampering secondary motives; what we did, we did more or less because we wanted to do it, and what we saw, we saw because it was there. In childhood only do we love things (and hate things too) for themselves alone.

Consequently when we are grown up, and life has assumed responsibilities, and at every turn we find ourselves hindered and beset with longing, we remember the days of our youth. "Ah, then," we say, "things were different . . . life was good . . . never again." And that in moderation

is harmless enough. The danger comes when we set about trying to re-enter that happy garden of childhood by refusing the responsibilities of age. For the truth is that we shall never be allowed to enter into that garden any more; the gate is shut. And longing to be there only fills us with unsatisfied desires, wasting our powers in a fruitless sorrow, and making of us only half-men—or less.

Looking back then is a pleasant occupation, and it is little, more. Our chief occupation is with Here and Now. Occasionally we come across someone with a memory so accurate that their recreation of the past forms a valuable record of a time now dead and a place now changed. It is the chief merit of Mrs. Huth Jackson's book, for instance, that in it she recaptures her Victorian childhood in bright, objective pictures. She remembers clearly and she remembers precisely, and there is no attempt in her memories to gild the lily or paint the rose. She was brought up amid the varied and coloured activities of that social and political world whereof her father, Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff, was an important and representative figure; and the impress of that vanished world has remained sharp and clear upon her sensitive mind. Mr. Vernon Knowles has no such regard for the simple, objective fact. Rather, in his brief pages, he would seem to wish to give to childhood a significance it does not possess. His account is distorted by an attempt to be mystical where mysticism is rather out of place. The moral of his book is that we *are* those places wherein our childhood was spent. Says the Voice, speaking to the youthful hero of "Eternity in an Hour": "I am yourself. You are speaking with your own spirit that was born of Glanville and Lofty and Brownhill." This surely is looking back on youth through the window of a false romanticism. Little is achieved by viewing the past with the eyes of the present; the necessary thing is to try and recapture the very eyes of the past.

R. H.

Novel Notes

GOOD THEMES AND BAD

By Wynyard Browne

The Fallow Land.

By H. E. Bates. 7s. 6d. (Jonathan Cape.)

**H. E. Bates.**

Portrait by Yvonne Gregory.

The Laughing Pioneer.By Paul Green.
7s. 6d. (Gollancz.)**Sons.**By Pearl S. Buck.
7s. 6d. (Methuen.)**Trinc!**By Francis
Watson. 7s. 6d.
(Dickson.)**Inflexions, 1931.**By James Cleugh.
7s. 6d. (Secker.)**Mutinous Wind.**By Robert
Speaight. 7s. 6d.
(Peter Davies.)

I opened "The Fallow Land" expectantly. I knew something of Mr. Bates's reputation as a novelist, though I had read none of his previous work. But I did not expect half the pleasure and satisfaction which I actually experienced. The story begins, as it ends, quietly. Its rise and fall is like the inexorable cycle of the seasons. Between a pre-War and a post-War October, over a period of nearly fifty years, three generations of a farming family live and work and love, marry and quarrel, suffer and die. The story is dominated by the small, tough, determined figure of Deborah. She is the wife of a handsome, brutal drunkard who leaves her, and the mother of the generation which is killed or wrecked by the War. For years she runs the farm alone, more successfully than any man had done, turning her face firmly from all disappointments, knowing that to brood over them would mean disaster. Her life is a series of shattered or dissipated hopes. She is continually faced with situations in which the only choice lies between giving up or going on more desperately with her work. Even death seems to present the same alternative, and she dies with thoughts of the land in her mind, and orders for the ploughing of the fallow field on her lips.

His theme, particularly in its minor incidents, gives plenty of opportunity for the popular sentimental violence. Mr. Bates could have interlarded his story with unnecessary paragraphs of squalor, brutality and lust, without fear of censure and with much hope of praise. But he is artist enough to resist such temptations to distort. Instead he has made a book of such unity and such beauty that it is impossible to isolate any part for especial praise. His mind is able to fuse into a whole the sweet tranquillity of the earth and the bitter struggle of life on the land, which he might easily have been content merely to contrast.

Other novelists, not intent on advanced experiment, would do well to take Mr. Bates's work as a model for their craft. Most of them might learn much from a careful study of his arrangement of narrative and of his sensitive, efficient and thoroughly modern prose. I cannot recommend "The Fallow Land" too strongly to any discriminating reader of novels.

In a rather confused prefatory note, Mr. Paul Green gives a slight geographical and historical sketch of the part of America about which he is writing, and a general description of its inhabitants. "The narrow moralism of the Scots settlers," he says, "has carried on in him (the poor white), and he goes oppressed by the world and by the strait-jacket of his religion. The juice and comedy of life have been squeezed out and left him sour-souled. . . . When sometimes the voice of poetry arises as an exception by his doorstep, he looks suspiciously upon it and most often thinks it fraught with levity of the devil, the dark

swamps and blasphemy against the Holy Ghost." If I had not read that I should have wondered why Mr. Green's hero was so nebulous a creature. After reading it, I suppose the reason to be that Mr. Green has tried to personify in him that "voice of poetry" which the people hate. Allegory is an unsatisfactory mode, formed, as Blake said, by the daughters of memory and not of imagination. Or as a German painter once remarked to Mr. Yeats, "it says things which could be better said in another way." "The Laughing Pioneer" would have been a better book if Mr. Green had shared Blake's scorn of allegory. As it is, he has made a serious attempt to work out a tragic theme: "Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law." He fails because Danny, the laughing pioneer himself, a boy tramp who sings to the guitar and behaves like most Celtic boys in fiction, remains merely the allegoric equivalent for an abstraction.

The construction of the whole is rather confused, and this allegorical theme, worked out side by side with, rather than by means of the "realistic" story, does not make for the sort of unity I have remarked in Mr. Bates's book. Separate passages remain memorable when their context is forgotten; for instance, the tales which Danny tells Miss Alice, and the vignette of a lovable family of negro servants, who are shown in favourable contrast with the embittered whites. In spite of its faults, "The Laughing Pioneer" is well above the average of modern novels.

The four other novels bring us down with a bump, with the possible exception of Mrs. Buck's romance. "Sons" attempts to soar, but it is overloaded with an enormous family of Chinese called Wang, in whose elaborate fortunes I failed to become interested, and a heavy, semi-biblical style which I suppose is intended to suit its Oriental subject. I believe the book is but slightly below Mrs. Buck's usual standard. Only when regarded as an attempted work of art does it deserve censure. I have no doubt that it will satisfy a large demand for romantic reading matter.

Good books cannot be written on bad themes, as Mr. George Moore pointed out recently. All novelists should have this maxim framed and hung over their beds.

A young English tourist (male) follows a young American tourist (female) down a subterranean tunnel in Touraine. They come up some miles away and find themselves in a house with several of Rabelais's characters. They stay there for two nights, make love and listen to a lot of conversation. Then in a thunderstorm all the others die, after having entrusted to them the spark of the worship of Pan to hand on to future generations. That is the theme of "Trinc!" If Mr. Watson had the wit and erudition of Mr. Norman Douglas, or half the vigour of Rabelais, this might have been more amusing. As it is the book is parasitic and provokes only an occasional titter. It is a pity because Mr. Watson has taken trouble. He would do better with another theme and characters of his own.

Mr. James Cleugh hardly has a theme at all. He writes about the nasty, stupid love affairs of a number of nasty, stupid people, none the less stupid for being poets, painters, novelists and film-stars. Predatory is an adjective, suggested by himself, which applies very well to all his characters except one, Caryll, who is too weak to be anything but an occasional prey. The book has a certain iridescence which might be thought attractive. Only if a writer has a clear conception of the medical possibilities of his art, which Mr. Cleugh has not, is such a subject worth while. Mr. Cleugh is wasting his talent.

After these inflexions, to enter the world of which Mr. Speaight writes is like going out into the sun. "Mutinous Wind" is a quiet story of a love that seemed weaker than it was. Mr. Speaight does not rise above the conventional, but he writes easily and well. The dialogue, and his knowledge of the stage, suggest that he should write plays.

“NOVELS”!

Black Mischief.

By Evelyn Waugh. 7s. 6d. (Chapman & Hall.)

Liquid Shadows.

By G. U. Ellis. 7s. 6d. (Duckworth.)

Unending Crusade.

By Robert Emmet Sherwood. 8s. 6d. (Heinemann.)

I Have Been Young.

By Elizabeth Lomond. 7s. 6d. (Gollancz.)

Peter Salop Errant.

A True Story transcribed by Clare Corbett. 7s. 6d. (Faber & Faber.)

Helen's Lovers, and Other Tales.

By Gerald Bullett. 7s. 6d. (Heinemann.)

When is a form not a form? The answer might be: When it is a novel. Beyond dispute the novel is the most vigorous and vital of contemporary art-forms, yet sometimes one is forced to wonder, regarding its total field and individual fruits, whether it can be regarded as a form any longer. Opening its arms ever wider in its ambition to embrace all life within its scope, it seems to have taken the attitude, to have suffered the fate, of a thing crucified—by its own good intentions. Almost anything may call itself a novel, and almost everything does, from Lionel Britton's "Hunger and Love" to Lawrence's "The Rainbow," from "William Clissold" to "Kristin Lavransdatter." The reviewer of novels must be an avaricious man—not of money indeed but of sensation, able to respond to every wind that blows, to forget his own personal theories of the novel and attend without prepossession to novels. Even when they turn out not to be novels at all, but short stories or autobiography, he must not shy at them.

"Black Mischief" was selected by the Book Society as its October Book of the Month. With all respect to Mr. Evelyn Waugh, the Society might have looked further and found better. Mr. Waugh still seems to suffer from his early illusion that the vapid fatuities of Ronald Firbank are funny, and in this as in his earlier books he mounts Firbanks all too readily, to his own delight perhaps, but the reader's tedium. This story of the modernisation of an African island empire by the One Year Plan of a progressive Emperor, Oxford-educated (which is a nasty knock for Oxford), starts badly, and I confess I should have given it up long before page 120, where the fun really begins, had I not been paid to persevere. The Emperor's instructions to his Minister of Modernisation are typical of the humour:

"Do you realise the magnitude of the fixed stars? They are immense. I have read a book which says that the mind boggles at their distances. I did not know that word—boggles. I am immediately founding an Institute for Astronomical Research. I must have Professors. Cable for them to Europe. Get me tip-top professors, the best procurable."

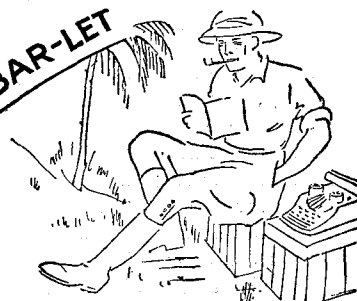
Mr. Waugh gets his laughs mainly from such detail, from speeches at native functions and from the relations of the Foreign Legations. It is all totally absurd.

Mr. G. U. Ellis is a novelist of distinguished abilities who never quite hits the mark. "Liquid Shadows" is a book to compel admiration rather than delight. It will please those who liked Mr. Aldous Huxley's "Point Counter Point," for it is in the same manner. It has the same up-to-dateness, the novelty rather than newness of ideas. It portrays, with little essential action, a group of men and women—but men mostly—circling round a woman who passes from man to man, talker to talker, with an almost total lack of emotion. The book is talk whizzing in a vortex, a study in total futility, done with vigour and wit, but starting nothing and getting nowhere.

There is plenty of action—and a minimum of talk—in Mr. Sherwood's "Unending Crusade," an easily written and easily read story of a young English earl's adventures as a soldier in Richard I's crusade to Acre. It is a pleasant, colourful tale, even if it has scarcely the "brilliant historical sense" the publisher claims for it. The mediæval and the modern consciousnesses are all one to the author, and he has a breezy way with anachronism, points which make for

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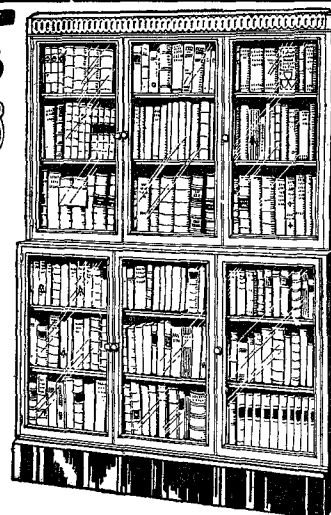
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ease and vividness in psychology but do little to illuminate history. And love's old sweet song makes a somewhat conventional appearance to round off the episodic narrative.

"I Have Been Young" is labelled a novel. It may be. But it has a ring of truth—the truth of life which lacks the truth of art—which makes one wonder whether it is not autobiography in more than form. It tells the story of a girl reared in a lunatic asylum of a home by a pious mamma and a drunken papa; who is early left an orphan to fend for herself; who goes first to London and then to Australia, where she marries a man to save him from drink. Now out of my own unhappy experience I passionately protest that the only thing to do with an habitual drunkard is to bash him on the head with one of his bottles and leave him cold—in the slang if not the literal sense! It cost Helen Forsyth the best years of her life to learn that remorseless truth. She tells her story with a passionate truthfulness of self-revelation which makes it both moving and convincing. If this book is fiction, then "Elizabeth Lomond" is a writer of quite unusual powers; if it is not, then one is bound to wonder under what name her earlier books appeared. Does the clue lie perhaps in her initials, reversed?

If "I Have Been Young" is fiction by courtesy, "Peter Salop Errant" can only be termed so by discourtesy, for it not only claims to be truth, but establishes its claim on every page of its account of six years' roughing it in Tasmania, Australia, India and South Africa on the part of one by turns farmer, gold-miner and mounted policeman. Nothing is forced, nothing heightened. It is a warmly human record which almost everyone will enjoy from beginning to end. Miss Corbett is to be congratulated upon a transcription so skilful as to leave no trace of her part in it.

Perhaps it is unfair to have left Mr. Bullett to the last, unless on the principle that the last shall be first. He is beyond question a master of the short story, and in "Helen's Lovers" and its ten companions we see both his range and his quality. He has a tender and beautiful understanding of intimate human relationships, that especially in his tales having a touch of terror, of the psychic, is peculiarly effective. Possible he touches high-water mark in "Wax," which one may regard as slum comedy or tragedy as one pleases. It is a little microcosm of humanity, perfectly finished. There is a quality of permanence in these stories which one seeks in vain in the more ostentatious work of many more highly praised writers.

GEOFFREY WEST.

JOANNA CANNAN

Snow in Harvest.

By Joanna Cannan. 7s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

There are so many novels about disastrous marriages nowadays one wonders sometimes people in real life dare to get married at all. Alicia, in Miss Joanna Cannan's new novel, would certainly have been an uncomfortable person for anyone to marry, with her aggressively "modern," orderly, schoolmistressy mind—"she had been born a decade too late to believe in good and bad, so she believed in intelligence and stupidity." She believed also that "one can put sex on one side," and despite the protests of her friend Maimie, who regarded marriage as a cage, she married Geoffrey Quarrier when he asked her, and with his indulgence they might not have made such a bad thing of it. He was proud of her honesty, her high principles and broad-mindedness. But, as the reader knows, certain events had shaped Geoffrey's life before he met her. In Russia, before the War, he had been passionately in love with a virtuous little dancer who refused him, and he meets her again, after twenty years, at a friend's house in Oxford. He is a professor at the university, and he and Alicia live in a village on the outskirts of the city, in a house that is terribly hygienic and equally cold. He meets Tanya again, for a moment feels the old thrill; then, remembering his wife and children, marvels at his one-time infatuation. Circumstances, and maybe their own wishes, tempt

them to renew the dangerous friendship; though if Alicia had not been so conscientiously determined not to be jealous, and if Mamie had not been so suspicious, so eager to be loyal to her friend and to betray the treacherous husband, little might have come of it. Alicia jumps to conclusions; they are false ones, but they land Geoffrey in the divorce court, anxious to defend his honour and Tanya's, to save his career, to prevent his two children being taken from him. The end is tragic and unexpected. Miss Cannan's characters are always clear-cut, drawn with satirical humour. With Geoffrey and Tanya she deals gently; Geoffrey is the popular conception of a typical Englishman—self-controlled, "wooden-faced"; Tanya possesses the subtle charm of sex-appeal. Alicia and Mamie are more unusual studies, and there is a suggestion of caricature about them, ruthless yet delightfully amusing. A clever novel this, written with sparkling clarity of style and a conciseness which makes for uncommonly easy reading.

ALMEY ST. JOHN ADCOCK.

THE THREE VOLUME NOVEL AGAIN

The Rakonitz Chronicles.

By G. B. Stern. 8s. 6d. (Chapman & Hall.)

Once In England.

By Ernest Raymond. 8s. 6d. (Cassell.)

The principal and obvious danger of the three-volume novel is that the writer, secure in an ample allowance of elbow-room, tends to verbosity, to repetition, to oratory; in brief, to a self-indulgence in the mere business of piling words upon words, which obscures the story, and also the quality of the story. Specially is this true of the present fashion for those family chronicles which, rather significantly, absorb the attention of so many important modern writers in an age when the family as a unit of first-class importance is alleged to be out of fashion.

This fault is to be found in both the books under review, but in Miss Stern's case her material is so profuse and rich that her eloquence, her rhapsodical and detailed descriptions of material things, her generous use of adjectives, are subdued into part of the ornate pattern to which the whole is fashioned. Her three novels, "Tents of Israel," "A Deputy Was King" and "Mosaic," have now been collected between two covers, and represent the family chronicle at its most formidable, and also, it should be said, at its most magnificent. For the Rakonitz family is no bread-and-butter English family living in one place and defying or submitting to commonplace conventions. No; they are Jews—French Jews, German Jews, Austrian Jews, powerful and rich, a clan which, though stretching from London to Budapest and Constantinople, is yet well aware of the existence and importance of every other member of the family, and celebrates births, deaths and weddings with an appetite which is at once dazzling and terrific.

It is Miss Stern's business, then, to interpret a great and formidable—the word insists on repeating itself—family in all its chief ramifications, though necessarily she pauses to illuminate more particularly those members whose personal history is most significant; and also to interpret the decline of the family as an all-powerful arbiter where the individual is concerned. In "Tents of Israel" the important figure is the Matriarch who spreads herself in opulence after opulence as the queen of the tribe, as first representative of the great days of the Rakonitz glory, wealth and unity. "A Deputy Was King" tells primarily the story of Toni, who marries a Christian to get away from the now impoverished family, from responsibilities; while "Mosaic," besides tying the ends together, gives us another full-length and intimidating portrait—that of Berthe who, childless, devours other women's sons, and who, like all the members of the true Rakonitz family, cannot live alone or leave other people alone.

Obviously Miss Stern has achieved something which

could only have been carried out by an author of extraordinary vitality, brilliance and, in this case, of an exuberant appreciation of material detail. If one adjective were needed to reflect the whole, I should select "sumptuous." Everything is sumptuous: clothes, banquets, furniture, feuds—and perhaps in its final effect a little cloying as an Oriental feast may well be. But, most certainly, a superb achievement.

Mr. Ernest Raymond's trilogy, containing "A Family That Was," "The Jestling Army" and "Mary Leith," consisting, so we are told, of 500,000 words and "set in England's stirring years, 1890-30," is an emotional mixture of religion, love and fighting. Right through the book the sentiments are all unimpeachable, but there are too many of them!

To illustrate. After the War, the book's hero, Tony O'Grogan, turns to the Church and becomes a curate at St. Wilfrid's, Thamesmouth. His purpose is to awake the smug, to shock the orthodox, and so he preaches sermons in which he explains that those whom the world calls sinners may be better men than the timid and virtuous. And so forth. And so on. And he does shock the vicar and part of the congregation.

Next he publishes a book of verses which he also hopes will shock the vicar, etc., but which do not because the vicar etc. are too stupid to understand their deadly satire. So he writes a book in which the satirical intention is plainer; and since this becomes the object of a stunt by the Press, this is understood and does shock. And Tony is very delighted!

The trouble is that these figures of broad-minded young men who have religious doubts, who entertain socialistic sentiments, who, though they are married, fall in love and then nobly give up the object of their new affections, belong nowadays to the region of stock figures; to that band of struggling souls who are so aware of the fact that they are struggling that they become a trifle tedious.

Yet though personally I found Tony an exceptionally unattractive hero, Mr. Raymond is undoubtedly a competent, readable and ingenious writer with a gift for satire—witness the description of the journalists preparing their copy at the Menin Gate. And his middle book, which is the best, contains fine descriptions.

NORAH HOULT.

THE HOUSE UNDER THE WATER. By Francis Brett Young. 8s. 6d. (Heinemann.)

In "The House Under the Water," Mr. Brett Young's fine and sensitively wrought prose is the vehicle of a story well worthy of its medium. It is the tale of an unusual man, a mixture of Norman-Welsh and Provençal by birth, domineering yet bitterly aware of his inferiority of breeding, headstrong and impetuous, proud and boastful—in short a living exaggeration; of that man's ineffectual struggle to master and profit from the ancestral acres which he inherits in the Radnorshire mountains; of his betrayal of his home and its revenge; and of his family, trailed in his wake through the vicissitudes of his tempestuous existence and fortunes.

A great theme and, in Mr. Brett Young's hands, skilfully handled; and the upshot is so fine a book that one fears to be labelled as unduly captious in offering the only criticism which it seems legitimate to make—namely that so tempestuous a story perhaps needed a writer of less distinction in style. As it stands, the perfection of style is such that in retrospect it is as though we had witnessed the storm and the tempest he tells of through the waters of the impounded Garon, whose clarity on quiet days permits one to see the house of Nant Escob similarly submerged and peaceful. Or is this only a part of his magic, the overplus of undoubted genius, imparting to the tale, as he tells it, the very influence of the waters, so that, despite their clarity, they deaden sound and soften the outlines in this uniquely characteristic story?

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ART AND HISTORY

By Geoffrey Rossetti

Ann Boleyn.

By E. Barrington. 7s. 6d. (Cassell.)

They Were Defeated.

By Rose Macaulay. 8s. 6d. (Collins.)

The Empress

By Carola Oman. 7s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

Richard Coverel and Company.

By James Turle. 7s. 6d. (Thornton Butterworth.)

Tudor Sunset.

By Mrs. Wilfrid Ward. 7s. 6d. (Sheed & Ward.)

An historical novel is of necessity a stillborn work of art—almost inevitably a museum piece. It will, like E. Barrington's "Anne Boleyn," appeal either to those archaeological sentimentalists who find past ages more amusing and interesting than their own, or to those naïve individuals who are delighted and surprised when their ancestors are shown as having had much the same passions as themselves. In such a book is exhibited little or no sensibility, and not infrequently almost as little history. Only the critically incompetent will claim that an attempt to recreate the atmosphere of the period of the Civil War or of Henry VIII is a *literary* performance. Such an attempt may well be an interesting contribution to history—an additional document for future scholars to see how one period viewed another—but it is not on that account a work of art, even though it may find its way into the histories of literature.

Scott's novels, it should be remembered, have a peculiar interest in that they were the first examples of what was then a new genre. They have an interest to the literary historian, for they are typical of the period in which they were written, with its "gothick" interest in mediæval history and the lives of common people. Moreover Scott was a skilled story-teller, and lived before the days of precise and accurate historians who have made the task of the modern historical novelist a tight-rope walking feat. For Scott allowed himself a liberty in the invention of historical detail which the public would not nowadays permit.

The modern taste (if it deserves to be called taste) for scientific accuracy is responsible for Miss Macaulay's attempt to render the conversations in "They Were Defeated" in the language of the seventeenth century. However successful Miss Macaulay may have been—and of this we have no means of judging—the aim seems to be misguided and no more than a *tour de force*. And if we did not find ourselves continually asking of one detail after another, whether it is true or imaginary, but mostly suspend our disbelief and swallow the whole, yet even in so deft a work as "They Were Defeated" the facts, the truth of which we know, make us pause over those about which we are doubtful. As soon as this happens, that part of ourselves which seeks historical truth and that part which demands the uninterrupted completion of an æsthetic whole, come into conflict, so that both art and history suffer. We feel that we are getting neither the one nor the other, but an adulterated mixture of both—much as when we read a translation of a famous author and wonder whether we have Euripides, Gilbert Murray or Swinburne.

Miss Macaulay's book is clearly written, the characters

are conventionally lively and move about within the framework of a neat plot, but the picture of Cambridge in the mid-seventeenth century is a fantasy and suffers, in a way which many fantasies do not, from the desire of the author to paint a "true" picture of a period—a picture which must be drawn from documents rather than from imagination, and certainly not from experience. On the other hand, the remoteness of the period in which "The Empress" is laid is an advantage to the author. We are more inclined to take her history for granted and to read her novel as a story, although it must be allowed "The Empress" is more than a competently written story. There is an abruptness of style and a delineation of the character of the Empress Matilda and of Henry I that are not a little pleasing and which give to the events a vivid reality. The facts are related boldly and straightforwardly, and there is an assurance in the telling of the most trivial detail that gives the illusion that the whole narrative is historically true. The confidence of the author is communicated to the reader, and one accepts without question her picture of England in the twelfth century. That she has been able to introduce so much history and yet work it into her narrative so satisfactorily, is no mean achievement on the part of the author.

It will seem almost paradoxically absurd to say that of the five novels named at the head of this article, Mr. Turle's "Richard Coverel and Company" is artistically the most successful, for the book contains practically no historical facts and is a crude adventure story—a "yarn" of the eighteenth century in which prize-fighting, pirates, treasure, typhoons and cannibals all occur one after the other. The very fact that the author cares nothing for historical truth makes him free to tell the story he has in mind in the manner most agreeable to himself. His book is one to read on a railway journey, and can fairly be described as a quite unimportant artistic success. Conversely Mrs. Ward's "Tudor Sunset" is an artistic failure. The patchwork of historical fact is tedious and sewn on clumsily—far more so than in "I Promessi Sposi," where history is unashamedly interpolated as an interlude in the story. Further, Mrs. Ward's anxiety to prove a case is irritating. However biased may be Protestant accounts of Roman Catholic atrocities, it seems pointless to try to restore the balance by equally grotesque exaggeration of Protestant cruelty. As a piece of propaganda "Tudor Sunset" is not convincing. Other *raison d'être* it does not seem to possess. On the whole "They Were Defeated" and "The Empress" are the most interesting of these productions in a genre the conditions of which inevitably preclude any important contribution being made to literature.

DEATH TO THE FRENCH.

By C. S. Forester. 7s. 6d. net. (Bodley Head.)

Warfare is the setting of the not very tactfully named "Death to the French." I am inclined to think the details of the French invasion of Portugal in 1810 are better known than the publishers suggest; it has often been dealt with in historical fiction, and the personal narratives existing are exceptionally numerous and interesting. Mr. Forester has evidently studied them closely, and he writes in clear, easy English. I am afraid he has rather thrown away a good central idea in not making more of his Rifleman Dodd, who, cut off from his regiment, plays the old game of *franc-tireur* against the French with the aid of his Portuguese allies. The story lacks the humour and sense of atmosphere of some of the stories of Wellington's old soldiers that have come down to us.

A. T. S.

VARIATIONS ON A CRIMINAL THEME

The Hanging Captain.

By Henry Wade. 7s. 6d. (Constable.)

The Notting Hill Murder.

By Clive Ryland. 7s. 6d. (Grayson & Grayson.)

The Red Castle.

By H. C. Bailey. 7s. 6d. (Ward, Lock.)

Murder By the Law.

By Paul McGuire. 7s. 6d. (Skeffington.)

The Road of Desperation.

By Mary Hastings Bradley. 7s. 6d. (Appleton.)

Experiences of a Bond Street Jeweller.

By Horace Annesley Vachell. 7s. 6d. (Cassell.)

There are three things common to all detective stories. There must be a crime, a solution and someone to arrive at that solution. Apart from these essentials, there is considerable scope for variation in treatment. At the moment the most popular crime would appear to be murder, but others are permitted and, having made his choice, the author can work out his plot on several lines. The treatment may be pseudo-scientific, matter-of-fact, blood-curdling or humorous. Ingenuity of plot may be considered more important than characterisation, while the detective may be chosen from Scotland Yard or from the growing ranks of the brilliant amateurs.

Some of this diversity of treatment is shown by the authors of the novels before me. All of the books may be loosely classified as "thrillers," yet no two of them are alike in handling. Only one of the six, in my opinion, is an example of the detective novel at its very best, and that is Henry Wade's "The Hanging Captain."

Mr. Wade is an author who can give his readers a pretty little problem to solve without loss of good characterisation, natural dialogue and a convincing verisimilitude. His latest book is a good novel, considered solely as a representation of living people.

The problem in detection is equally carefully worked out. The author plays fair with the reader all the time. The clues are there to show whose hand set Captain Sterron's body dangling from a noose in his study. If we fail to read them rightly it is because we are not clever enough.

We are much further from real life in "The Notting Hill Murder," which deals with the mystery surrounding one of those "master criminals" who are encountered more frequently in fiction than in our police records. Who is "The Hawk" and why did he leave a strange corpse in somebody's flat? That is what Scotland Yard, assisted by a talented amateur detective, set out to discover. If the reader fails to spot the one clue to the identity of the criminal that is generously given by the author, the end of the story will be surprising enough.

A different treatment again meets us in H. C. Bailey's "The Red Castle." Scotland Yard appears on the scene, but the detective laurels are carried off by Joshua Clunk, a plump little crooks' lawyer of engaging behaviour. There is plenty of excitement, relieved by touches of humour, in this book—murder, robbery, abduction—and through it all dances the figure of Mr. Clunk, crooning Sankey and Moody hymns, sucking lollipops, showing the Yard the trail. He is one of Mr. Bailey's most charming creations, and I hope that we have not seen the last of him.

Mr. McGuire's strong suit is his selection of the weapon used to dispose of an erotic novelist who was about to publish a book of libellously outspoken reminiscences. Unfortunately the characters in the novel are almost without exception so unpleasant that the reader's interest wanes before the murder is reached. It is difficult too to believe in the motive for the crime. But for the method he has chosen Mr. McGuire must have full marks. It is simple, subtle and convincing.

"The Road of Desperation" comes from America, and depends, if it depends on anything at all, for sheer speed to carry through its absurdities. Every stock device of melodrama is used. The strange will, the villain passing himself off as the hero, the marriage "in name only," the

opportune reappearance of the supposed corpse, the death-bed repentance—they are all here, large as life and twice as unnatural. And if you want more there is elephant hunting in Africa thrown in.

Lastly we come to Mr. Vachell's book of short stories. The date is the beginning of this century, and the central character a partner in a firm of jewellers. The dialogue and plots have a leisurely flavour that takes the reader back to a former generation. Those who like their criminals to use aeroplanes and powerful cars, rather than broughams and hansom cabs, may vote these tales of missing tiaras and stolen emeralds on the slow side, but for all that the book has an atmosphere of reality that some of the more up-to-date "thrillers" mentioned above have failed to reproduce.

MARCUS MAGILL.

PHIL MAY

Phil May : 1864-1903.

By James Thorpe. 30s. (Harrap.)

After death a popular artist suffers temporary eclipse. Rembrandt was neglected for nearly two hundred years; Hogarth was under a cloud for over a century. To this natural law Phil May, fit to be bracketed with the masters of Leiden and Leicester Fields, is no exception. It is not yet thirty years since Phil May died; to a whole generation he is only a name.

Fortunately Mr. Thorpe, himself a *Punch* artist, has gathered most of the facts and some of the anecdotes of the life of this "master draughtsman and humorist" whilst friends of Phil May are still with us to supply them. Of few artists are more good anecdotes told than of May, for of queer, incredible, ludicrous experiences he had many. He was not merely a humorous artist; he was an artist humorist. He illustrated his own jokes; he lived a joke. Thus there is about his work a spontaneity lacking in the teller of another's jest. By drastic simplification, Phil May saved line draughtsmanship from choking by over elaboration; he broke also the tiresome tradition of long-winded captions so dear to the du Maurier school. Phil May could make a word do duty for a sentence; a line serve for a jumble of cross hatching. He shared with Rembrandt and Hokusai the secret of a shorthand few can write, but all can read. Like Hokusai too he was "mad about drawing." During his three years in Australia this non-stop draughtsman, May, produced nearly nine hundred drawings. He drew on his death-bed. As a portraitist few Academicians could touch him.

Phil May's popularity with the public was the popularity of the laugh promoter. He has yet fully to be appreciated as a draughtsman. Five years ago there was no example of his work in the Tate; only through recent private generosity is he represented in the Bloomsbury collection. But when May's humour is as obsolete as Hogarth's moralising, then we shall realise Phil May was a great draughtsman, not merely an illustrator of comic papers, just as Hogarth is acclaimed a great painter, not a pictorial moralist.

It is instructive to compare the hundred and thirty drawings Mr. Thorpe has so carefully selected with the drawings in a current issue of *Punch*, and trace May's influence. What an etcher he would have made! These reproductions are of interest not only to the student of draughtsmanship, but are a sidelight on the Bohemian life of the nineties.

Phil May was thirty-nine when he died of phthisis and cirrhosis of the liver. He was contemplating illustrating Dickens, an author with whom this typically English artist had much in common. But would May's temperament have allowed him? Like Hogarth, who made a mess of illustrating "Hudibras" because he was too original an artist to interpret another's ideas, Phil May might have failed to illustrate Dickens. Perhaps it was as well he died, as every true artist hopes to die, before his powers diminished.

HESKETH HUBBARD.

An illustration from this book will appear in the Christmas Number.

For the Writers of To-Morrow

WRITING FOR CHILDREN—VERSE

By Alfred Dunning

Poetry-writing for children, like poetry-writing for adults, is the last thing in the world to be subject to "golden rules." For this reason, all I have to offer on the subject are a few suggestions which you may take or leave in the knowledge that in either case you will be right in doing so.

If you consider some of the poetical works which most appeal to children you will find that they were not, in the first place, expressly written for juveniles. They contain however elements which delight children, and it is to these that I wish to draw your attention.

In the first place, then, bear in mind that few children enjoy or indulge in the silent reading of poetry. Most of their contacts with verse are made in school where reading or speaking aloud is rightly required. Design your juvenile verse therefore to appeal primarily to the ear. Above all things stress the rhythm, for this, in children as well as in all other "primitive" and "natural" life, is as essential as air. It does not greatly matter if the "message" of your poetry, or even its language, is a trifle above the heads of the children, so long as the poem has that "swing" which sends it rollicking through the mind and tripping lightly off the tongue. In this connection remember the nonsense verses of Lear and Carroll, and consider why they appeal.

Your rhythm may be considerably aided by the choice of a simple rhyme-scheme. Personally I feel that the rhymed couplet and the straightforward, alternate-line rhyme are best, but in this of course it is impossible to be dogmatic. Let the rhymes be clear however and, within reason, come at the end of a phrase.

To sustain rhyme and rhythm, "alliteration's artful aid" is not to be despised nor, complementary to it, the use of "high-sounding" words, plosives and similar devices. Recall the effect of such lines as "The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew," or "The bare black cliff clang'd round him," or "I sprang to the stirrup and Joris and he." To put the matter very colloquially, and with special reference to an appeal to boys, they can get "their teeth" into such lines. Many girls enjoy them just as much but, as might be expected, the poem with an array of sibilants is often preferred.

Ballads, you will know, were enjoyed in the past—as they may be to-day—by people who had no education in prosody or literary taste. One of the reasons, apart from

the narrative element which you will not neglect in your longer poems, was the repetition they contained. Liens, phrases and choruses were repeated and assisted in maintaining the rhythm. Such repetition will be a valuable aid to your success in writing verse for children. You will find it in very many of their favourite poems. Milne has it in several of his Christopher Robin verses. It is present in such a favourite as Noyes's "The Barrel-Organ," "Go down to Kew in lilac time, in lilac time, in lilac time," and indeed the examples which one might quote are numberless.

From the viewpoint of practical writing, however, it may be said that the ballad or allied form of verse offers little chance for publication. Most journals which accept children's verse limit their space to four or five stanzas. This being the case, you will probably wish to concentrate on lyric rather than narrative utterance.

None the less—indeed the more so—rhyme and rhythm will need attention. The choice of a lyric theme which is likely to prove suitable should present no difficulty if you keep in mind the fact that children, unless very young, are usually able to appreciate "cries" against injustice, poverty and wrongdoing, or praises of "virtue in the raw"—grandeur, heroism and honesty. They can admire nobility and patriotism, and will thank you (by their enjoyment of your work) if you can produce something so exciting to speak as "Blow, bugle, blow" or "Oh, to be in England!"

I am bound by reasons of space to omit reference to poems of a humorous nature, except to say that real whimsy—as opposed to the silly "Wouldn't it be funny, dears?" variety of some "Children's Corners"—is always acceptable, so long as it is not a kind of "Reflection of Milne." Children read or learn far too little humorous poetry.

For Competition

Write a poem of a lyric nature, or two or three stanzas of such a poem, designed to delight boys of ten or twelve, on the subject of "Speed."

A book or books to the value of a guinea, to be chosen by the recipient, will be given for the best entry. Competitors must be not less than 16 and not more than 18 years of age, and if at school should give the name and address of the school, as well as their own name, address and age. Closing date, December 12th.

PRIZE COMPETITIONS FOR NOVEMBER

A Tercentenary Ode ; Justification of Collectors

Answers to these Competitions (each on a separate sheet bearing name and address of sender) must be received by the Editor not later than December 10th. A competitor may enter for all the Competitions, but must cut out the coupon and send this with each answer or group of answers, and address envelope :

"The Prize Page," THE BOOKMAN, St. Paul's House, Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

Competitors must please keep copies of their MSS., as the Editor cannot undertake to return them.

THE PRIZES OFFERED THIS MONTH ARE:

- I.—ONE GUINEA for a Tercentenary Ode on the building of St. Paul's Cathedral by Sir Christopher Wren.
- II.—HALF A GUINEA for the best paragraph of not more than two hundred and fifty words on "The Real Value of First Editions."

III.—HALF A GUINEA for the best list of twelve literary anniversaries to be observed in 1933.

IV.—THREE NEW BOOKS for the best quotation from English poetry of the sixteenth century applicable to any book advertised in this number.

V.—THE BOOKMAN will be sent post free for twelve months to the sender of the best suggestion for a competition.

Results of September Competitions

- I.—ONE GUINEA for the best poem on Sir Walter Scott is awarded to Miss F. Newbery Birch, "Pental," Tintagel, North Cornwall, for the following:

TO SIR WALTER SCOTT

I watch the firelight glimmer on your books—
Those green-backed books you wrote so long ago—
And dream I see you limping to and fro,
Piercing the shadows in the hidden nooks

With questing eyes—and lo, the room is filled
With dim, romantic figures of the past
That give you friendly greeting . . . Till at last
All vanish when the lamp's white light is spilled.
O valiant wielder of a valiant pen,
That crept undaunted through the mists of pain,
The Bards salute you and the Scribes bow low,
For you have passed beyond our human ken
Into a realm of story, where in vain
Hosts of forgotten men have longed to go.

Highly commended are Emily Lewis (Mansfield),
L. Bruce (Crayford), G. M. Aldridge (Gloucester),
John Purdie (Paisley), C. S. Crofts (Canterbury),
Margaret Hadfield (Sheffield), H. W. Howarth
(Hampstead), A. T. Riddell (Midlem), John E. Woods
(Coventry), M. Ray (Croydon), J. M. Burns (Malta),
G. B. Attwell (London).

II.—HALF A GUINEA for the
best paragraph on "Is
the Press a Menace?"
is awarded to W. A.
Rathkey, 14, Oxford
Road, N.W.6, for the
following:

Assuming, as we are bound
to, that the material and
spiritual betterment of man-
kind can only be forwarded
by a reasonable adherence to
the truth, the Press of to-day
becomes an appalling menace
to such attainment. If the
late T. W. H. Crosland said
of the press functioning in the
comparatively scrupulous Edwardian days: "Of its
genius for misrepresentation I am convinced," what would
he think of the national press now, when vital affairs
are shunted out of sight after much less than a nine-day
run; when the scum of current events is regularly and
thickly splashed on front pages and purveyed to millions
of "blind mouths"; when party papers are making a
dangerous farce of democracy (dangerous not so much
for Demosthenes as Demos!). It is all very well for the
open-minded intellectuals who, whilst gaily drinking in
this ubiquitous dope, never fail to take such hebdomadal
purgatives as are provided by the reviews; but what of
the countless innocents who further constipate their minds
by sabbatical orgies of salacity and pseudo-religious cant?
What—more vital still—of the children suckled on the
footling adventures of some cretinous, badly drawn cartoon
family, storied with a baby-talk unction that would shame
Pecksniff? As to that cardinal sin of the press—mutila-
tion or total suppression of free speech—one has but to send
in a reader's letter containing views even slightly contrary
to proprietary requirements to prove that the freedom of
the press is so much misleading nonsense; and the views
submitted need not necessarily be radical.

We also select for printing the entry from Gordon
Simpson, Bootham Grange, York:

"The Press"—by which we mean the newspaper press
—in its infancy was kept under constraint appropriate to
a nursing; when the child grew stronger and older it
demanded and obtained a liberty which was not usually
abused. It thundered indeed, but in Addisonian phrase
well suited to the traditional respectability of its mid-
Victorian readers.

In the later eighties it must be admitted that newspapers
became somewhat dull, as though suffering from premature
old age. Then came a time when fresh blood from over-
seas was infused into its veins and, like Dr. Faustus, the
Press was rejuvenated. But at a price! It may well be

asked in these days whether it has not sold its soul for
the sake of its circulation.

There is a twofold menace:—Power concentrated in the
irresponsible hands of a few newspaper magnates enables a
private opinion, reiterated daily in a dozen or more prints,
to give an impression of a popular clamour. In a demo-
cratic age, which counts heads but discounts brains, this is
a menace to the State; Exploitation of crime by melo-
dramatic accounts of trials, and by sordid details of the
criminal's "career," is a menace to feeble minds and is in
execrable taste.

As a whole, however, we may congratulate ourselves
upon our Press. Liberty rarely degenerates into licence.
The menace of publicity is some deterrent to evildoers and,
as the watch-dog of public
affairs, our Press is a menace
to incompetence.

Highly commended
among a great number of
entries are J. E. Rodgers
(West Ealing), A. Williams
(Wood Green), V. A. Ralph
(Folkestone), B. M. Beard
(Bexleyheath), Eldon
Carran (Doncaster), K.
Gallagher (Liverpool), M.
Berry (Manchester), S.
Barrington McClean (Glas-
gow), P. M. Stone (Walt-
ham, Mass.), W. J. L.
Nancholas (Wandsworth),
P. M. Leath (Spenborough),
Hewson Cowen (Putney),
T. W. Durrant (Wilm-
slow), Cécile Franks (West
Hampstead), May Belben
(Wimborne), Mannington
Sayers (Monmouth).

The Proprietors and the Editor of "THE BOOKMAN"
are offering

A First Prize of £10 10/-

A Second Prize of £5 5/-

**A Third Prize of a Volume
of Barrie's Collected Plays**

*for the best three Essays received from any competitor
under 19 years of age on the following subject:*

Give in not more than five hundred words the
report that might have been sent to a modern
newspaper by a special correspondent on the
scene at either of the following incidents:

1. The entry of the Wooden Horse into Troy.
2. The removal of the Mace by Cromwell at
the end of the Long Parliament.

*All entries must be sent in before December 31st, 1932. Envelopes
should be marked "Essay" and must be accompanied by the
coupon on page 142.*

III.—HALF A GUINEA for the best epigram to serve as
a sub-title for Thomas Derrick's cartoon of
T. S. Eliot is awarded to Mrs. Greaves, "The
House at the End," Farnham Common, Bucks,
for the following:

FAREWELL TO ORPHEUS

In such sad light a curvèd dolphin brought us
Where gentle maidens' sighs are borne along;
(This music crept by me along the waters):
"Sweet Thames! flow softly till he end his song."

Highly commended are the entries of C. E. J. Capern
(Oxted), G. B. Attwell (London), John E. Woods
(Coventry) and W. A. Rathkey (London).

IV.—THREE NEW BOOKS for the best quotation from
twentieth century English poetry applicable to
any book advertised in the September number
are awarded to Rev. Edwin J. Matthews, The
Rectory, Calstone, Calne, Wilts, for the
following:

MATERIALISM. By J. S. HALDANE, C.H., M.D., F.R.S.
(Hodder & Stoughton.)

"I wonder to myself a lot:
'Now is it true, or is it not,
That what is which and which is what?'"

A. A. MILNE, *Winnie, The Pooh.*

We also select for printing:

THE POETRY OF T. S. ELIOT.

By HUGH ROSS WILLIAMSON. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

"The revelation that is always there,
But somehow is not always clear to me."

C. H. SORLEY, *Marlborough.*

(John E. Woods, 63, Mayfield Road, Earlsdon,
Coventry.)

V.—THE BOOKMAN will be sent post free for twelve
months to Joyce Woodhouse, The Lodge,
Brundall, Norfolk.

"WRITERS OF TO-MORROW" COMPETITION.

The prize of books to the value of a guinea, to be chosen by the recipient, is awarded to Wanda Wiles, Fairview College, Dartmouth, South Devon, and the entries of K. Westmore (Rock Ferry), Muriel May Smith (Kansas, U.S.A.), Gabriel Seal (Edgbaston) (whose illustrations are excellent), and Joan Harrison (Barnsley) are highly recommended.

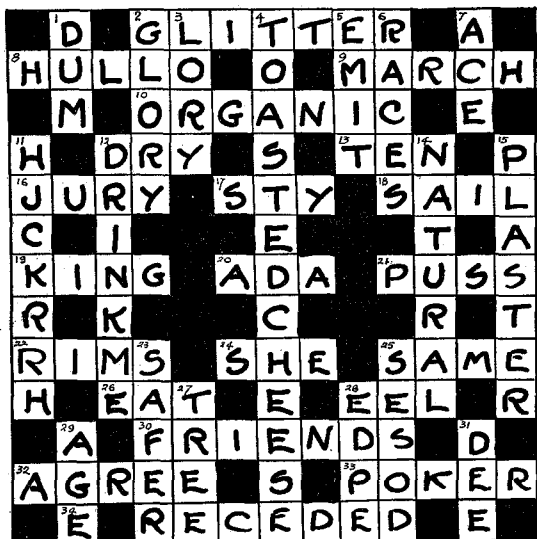
CROSSWORD No. 23.

The prize of a guinea is awarded to Peter Manning, 97, Hadleigh Road, Leigh-on-Sea.

A £50 Children's Book Competition has been arranged by Messrs. Burns Oates & Washbourne. For full particulars see page ii.

"THE BOOKMAN" CROSSWORD No. 25

Solution to Crossword XXIII



KIPLING

BY "PROCRUSTES"

A prize of one guinea will be sent to the sender of a correct solution who supplies the best clue to 9 down.

CLUES ACROSS:

1. Character in "Stalky & Co."
11. What the fog-horn of St. Cecilia does.—("Many Inventions.")
12. She was "Titania, with a wreath of columbines and a fox-glove wand."
13. "Oh you four winds that blow so strong
And know that this is . . .
Stoop for a little and carry my song"—
15. "I've never sailed the Amazon,
I've never reached Brazil;
But the . . . and the *Magdalena*,
They can go there when they will!"
Reverse her to find what all poets are allowed to do occasionally.
17. "Invisible about mosques, the dweller among the slippers of the Faithful, who hinders folk from their prayers."
—("Kim.")
19. "She is not any common Earth,
Water or wood or air,
But Merlin's Isle of . . .
Where you and I will fare."
21. Verb.
22. Begin 20.
23. With 5, an Eastern title.
25. Indian city.
28. See 42.
29. Conjunction.
30. "Who gave up their lives, at the Queen's Command,
For the Pride of their . . . and the Peace of the Land."
32. "Unless you've particular wish to die quick, you'll avoid steering close to the North Sea . . ."
34. "From . . . to rose-oak, from rose-oak to fir,
From level to upland, from upland to crest."
38. Persian city.
39. "Well, ah, fare you well, and it's . . . slams the door on us,
Whirling like a windmill through the dirty scud to lee."
41. Curtail an Eastern drug mentioned by Kipling.
42. Shere Khan (with 28).
43. The lights along it
"watch the ships of England go—
From reef and rock and skerry—over headland, ness and voe."
44. Diphthong.
45. "England shall bide till Judgment tide" by this and two other trees.
46. "For the great . . . himself must attend to the hail—
'In the name of the Empress, the Overland Mail!'"

CLUES DOWN:

2. "Pantomime, sir. The Head gave us leave," said . . .
as the only member of the Sixth concerned."

3. Begin 11.
4. Those who
"go in a flung festoon,
Half-way up to the jealous moon!"
5. See 23.
6. "Jungle Book" character.
7. "All you big steamers" abbreviated.
8. "'Rome can neither fight nor rule. She is taking her men out of Britain'—meaning *he* was at the gate.
10. "A mud-and-brick and thatch-and-stick village."—
("Second Jungle Book.")
14. "There's nothin' this side 'Eaven or 'Ell Ubique doesn't mean."
But actually it stands for this abbreviation.
16. First word of the Buddhist invocation.
18. Half 13.
20. "Royal and Dower-Royal, I the Queen
Fronting thy richest sea with richer hands—
A thousand mills . . . through me where I glean
All races from all lands."
23. Mr. Henry Albert Bivens had these letters on the end of his name.
24. Where the crimes of Clapham are chaste.
26. "Singer and tailor am I—
Doubled the joys that I know—
Proud of my lilt through the sky,
Proud of the house that I sew."
27. "As the dawn was breaking the Sambhur . . .
Once, twice and again!"
31. Associated with Stalky.
32. "We are the Little Folk—we!
Too little to love or to hate.
Leave us alone and you'll see
How we can drag down the Great!"
33. Reverse 14.
35. "Equal Time hath shovelled it
'Neath the wrack of Greece and Rome.
Neither wait we any more
That worn . . . which Argo bore."
Jumble it.
36. Exclamation frequently of use to Kipling in preserving his metre.
37. "And past all speech our Loyal hearts always,
Always our hearts lay open, . . . to . . ."
38. "And Tomlinson looked down and down, and saw beneath his feet
The frontlet of a tortured . . . milk-white in hell-mouth heat."
40. Negative.

Crossword No. 25

